Tuesday 21 January 2025

Amateur Photographer

Sony Alpha A1 II

It's **'the best camera** Sony has ever made' but is it worth the price-tag?

Passionate about photography since 1884

The art of colour

Master of colour photography, **Eric Meola** on creating images with visual impact

Eyewitness

Samar Abu Elouf's award-winning reportage of Gaza

Weegee's world

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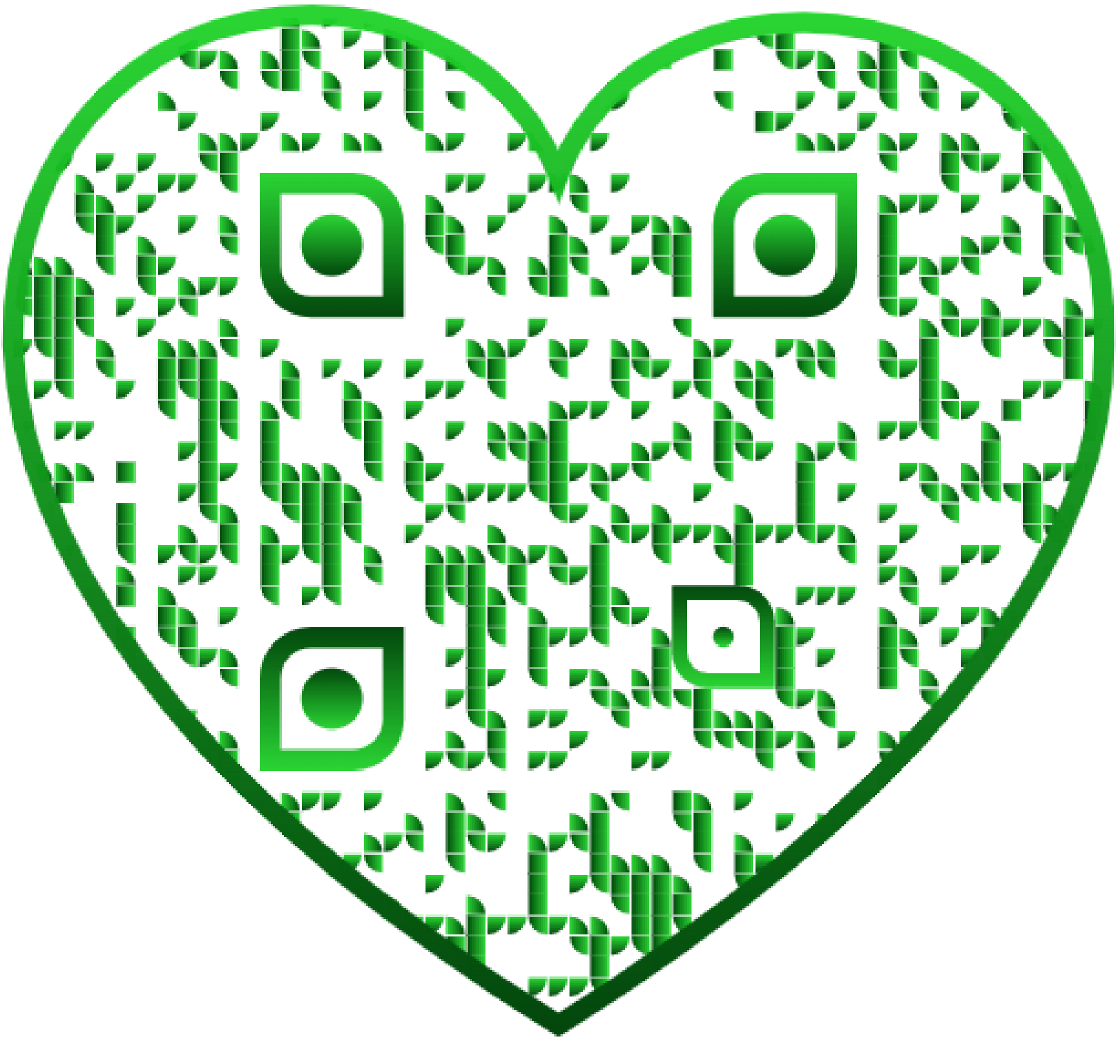

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© SAMAR ABU ELOUF

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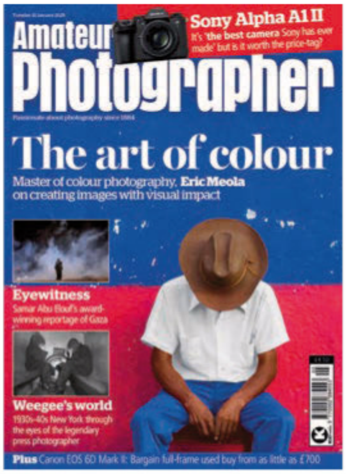
Welcome

Most cameras shoot colour by default these days, yet for most of us the fact that our photos contain colours is incidental. But colour can be used as a compositional building block just as lines and shapes can be. When we compose our images around the colours themselves the results can be spectacular, as Eric Meola demonstrates this week. Also in this issue we showcase the striking but heartbreaking work of award-winning Palestinian photojournalist Samar Abu Elouf, and revisit the archive of Weegee, whose gritty black & white images of crime scenes and the sordid underbelly of New York between the 1930s and '50s made him a legend. Finally we test the expensive but technologically state-of-the-art new Sony A1 II.

Nigel Atherton, Editor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COVER PICTURE © ERIC MEOLA. INSET PICTURE, ABOVE: © SAMAR ABU ELOUF. INSET PICTURE, BELOW: © WEEGEE/INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES

Our cover image was taken by Eric Meola. Read his tips for shooting colour on page 36

THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

HOLLIE LATHAM HUCKER
Technique Editor

Hollie finds out more about top US colour master Eric Meola's work

AMY DAVIES
Features Editor

Amy speaks to one of the authors of a new book celebrating the work of Weegee

PETER DENCH

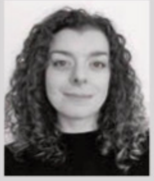
The AP regular writes about Palestinian photojournalism prizewinner Samar Abu Elouf

ANDY WESTLAKE
Technical Editor

Our chief reviewer tests the Sony Alpha A1 II, Sony's latest professional flagship

MICHAEL TOPHAM

In *Second-hand Classic*, AP's former reviews editor looks at the Canon EOS 6D Mark II



JESSICA MILLER
Dep Online Editor

Our social media manager selects some more great reader pictures, on page 44.

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Leica SL3-S lands, with many new features

LEICA has announced the SL3-S as the latest addition to its SL System, which combines high-end photography and video features. The SL3-S features a new BSI CMOS full-frame sensor with 24MP native resolution, 48MP and 96MP multishot modes, and a new AF system. The latter incorporates the latest generation of phase detection AF (PDAF), depth map (object detection AF) and contrast detection AF, enabling continuous shooting at up to 30 frames per second with full autofocus support. This makes the SL3-S the fastest Leica system camera ever built.

It can also record up to 6K video and offers 3:2 open-gate recording for added flexibility. Portrait-format videos can be recorded in 4K, 9:16 without loss of quality, for example, Leica says, and the field of view in recorded material can be determined retrospectively too. The SL3-S also records HDMI-RAW in 5.9K at 30fps to external display recorders.

Content credentials, too

Furthermore, the SL3-S is the first camera in the SL System to come with content credentials technology, enabling each image to be 'signed' with tamper-proof metadata, including information about the photographer, the creation date and editing details. Other key highlights are shared with its 60MP SL3 stablemate. These include in-body image stabilisation up to 5 stops, a 3.2in tilting touchscreen and a 5.76m-dot electronic viewfinder with 0.76x magnification.

The Leica SL3-S is available now for £4,500 from Leica Stores and authorised dealers (visit leica-camera.com/sl3-s for more information).

LEICA
LEICA
APO-SUMMICRON-SL 1:2/35 ASPH.

The SL3-S combines photo and video features

Rotolight reborn

BACK in September, photography and video lighting specialist Rotolight went into administration. The brand is now back, but run by a different company – headed up by former Tiffen executive Daniel Waite.

'I am no stranger to Rotolight as my other company, Brand Monkey, used to run the digital side, including advertising,' Daniel explains. 'Rotolight is now owned and operated under a different entity, with a different management team, and is being run "lean" at the moment. So we've streamlined operations and cut costs – as Rotolight always had a strong digital presence, it's a good fit for our team at Brand Monkey, who play an integral role in growing the brand.'

As well as digital expertise, Daniel stresses his background in manufacturing via Tiffen, along with a good understanding of Rotolight products and their life cycle. 'The NEO 3 Pro, AEOS 2 Pro and Anova Pro 3 (which launched last year) haven't even had their full life cycle yet. Short term, it's been about keeping these products in the marketplace so the R&D that was injected into them comes to fruition. The Anova Pro 3 didn't even get its full lift-off before the old firm went into administration. So we're currently focusing on these existing lights rather than launching new ones.'

The new firm can reduce prices of existing Rotolight products too, says Daniel. 'We can cut prices as we've cut costs, and can now focus on core markets. We can offer a light that used to sell for £600 for £300 or £400, for example. Our new-to-brand customer base has already increased by 250% as a result.'

Shipping and customer care processes have also been overhauled. 'We have to draw a line somewhere on honouring guarantees from the "old" Rotolight, but anyone coming to us with problems will get an unbelievably discounted rate to fix them – so long as the product is not too old. It's a testament to Rotolight's products that I can count on one hand the number of people who've come back to us with faulty issues.'

See rotolight.com where customers can still enjoy the relaunch pricing, ending soon.

Rotolight is back: Daniel Waite at his desk

© RÉHAHN PHOTOGRAPHY

Making a good impression

THIS gorgeous image appears in *Impressionism - From Photography To Painting*, a new book by Vietnam-based photographer, Réhahn. The book pays tribute to the revolutionary Impressionist painters who inspired the French-born photographer, and reveals his creative take on travel photography – including shooting through fire and using reflections in water. The book goes on sale in February for £125, from www.rehahnphotographer.com

'Ocean Dream' by Réhahn

More Sigma RF mount lenses

SIGMA has announced UK pricing and availability for the 16mm F1.4 DC DN | Contemporary and 23mm F1.4 DC DN | Contemporary prime lenses for Canon RF mount. These are for APS-C cameras, so there is still no sign of Canon allowing third parties to make full-frame RF lenses. The 16mm costs £389 and the 23mm £479, and both go on sale on 23 January.

The Sigma 23mm F1.4 DC DN | Contemporary for Canon RF mount

Photoshop gets more collaborative

LOREM IPSUM DOLOR
Guy Wang
Sloan R
Sarah Kay

Live Co-Editing: coming soon

ADOBE has announced the latest updates to Photoshop, with a new feature called Live Co-Editing enabling users to work more collaboratively – multiple designers can edit a single Photoshop document across different computers, for example.

Live Co-Editing, which is still at beta stage, follows on from other additions to Photoshop, including more sophisticated distraction removal technology and a more intuitive Selection Brush. See www.adobe.com/uk/

The Redmi Note 14 Pro series seems particularly good value, but it's a very crowded market

Budget Android phones with decent camera specs

IT'S BEEN a busy week for new smartphones, with a series of reasonably priced Android handsets coming out from various Xiaomi sub-brands.

Top of the range is the Redmi Note 14 Pro and Pro+, which both feature a 200MP main camera with image stabilisation (f/1.65), along with 8MP ultra-wide (f/2.2) and 2MP macro (f/2.4) cameras, and 4K video recording at 30fps. Prices start from just £249 for the Redmi Note 14 Pro with 8GB and 256GB storage. The main camera on the Redmi Note 14 is more modest – 108MP – but prices start from a low £179, and that includes 4K video recording at 30fps.

Meanwhile, another Xiaomi brand, POCO, has released the X7 Pro, aimed at younger tech enthusiasts on a budget. It features a 50MP main camera with optical image stabilisation (f/1.5), an 8MP ultra-wide camera, a selfie-friendly 20MP front camera and 4K video recording at 60fps. Prices start from £309.

Finally, the POCO X7 has the same camera array but video recording is at 30fps, rather than 60. Prices start from £249. See mi.com for more details of these new phones.

Remembering an Olympus stalwart

WE ARE sad to report the death of Barry Taylor, a former managing director of Olympus UK. Barry died on 2 January at the age of 86, having retired from Olympus in 1998.

'He inherited the role from importer David Williams, and Olympus became the first wholly owned subsidiary of a Japanese photographic company in the UK,' recalls Ian Dickens, another former managing director and close colleague. 'What followed was extraordinary. Allied to top advertising agency CDP and a friendship with David Bailey, the Olympus Trip became a UK favourite, selling over 1,000,000 cameras in the years that followed. Globally, the UK was the only market where Olympus became leader, thanks to Barry's vision and marketing acumen. He was an exceptional manager, putting people at the heart of his business and treating them with respect, compassion and trust. It was why so many of us remained at Olympus for so long.'

Barry also helped to save Dimbola Lodge, the home of Julia Margaret Cameron, from demolition and the now-thriving museum and gallery named their prime space 'The Olympus Gallery' in recognition of his contribution. He was also made an honorary fellow of the RPS for his efforts.

Barry Taylor's funeral will take place on 6 February and our condolences go out to his family and many friends.

© IAN DICKENS

Former Olympus UK managing director, Barry Taylor

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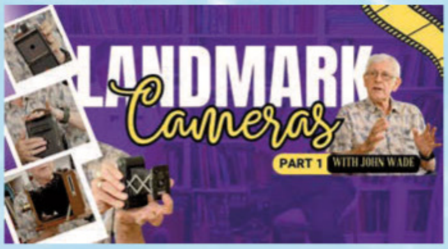
SOME RECENT VIDEOS

60s Classic cameras
WITH JOHN WADE
Groovy



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VS
PENTAX 17
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HALF FRAME

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Clockwise from left:

Iman by John Swannell, 1984

Eartha Kitt by (Edward) Russell Westwood, 1951

Stormzy by Olivia Rose, 2016

Picture Perfect: A Century of Fashion Photography from the National Portrait Gallery

Until 20 April, Gainsborough's House, Sudbury, Suffolk
See gainsborough.org for opening times

An interesting look at how the past century's fashions have changed, featuring some of the world's best photographers, says **Amy Davies**

As a collection of 'fashion greats', this a superb exhibition. Including 29 photographs which span across ten dacades, some of the big names include Cecil Beaton, Irving Penn, Norman Parkinson, John Swannell and Miles Aldridge – so not just 'big' names, but positively supersized.

The exhibition aims to highlight the role that fashion plays in culture, with different styles themselves shaping contemporary culture. Not only are the photographers immediately recognisable but there's also a host of celebrities and fashion icons featured, including The Beatles, Audrey Hepburn, Twiggy, Kate Moss, Lily Cole and Stormzy.

Created in collaboration with The National Portrait Gallery, the show is part of the Inspiring People project which has been funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund as well as the Art Fund.

This is a great opportunity to see some of the NPG's collection of fantastic photography outside its normal home in London. If you've never been to Gainsborough's House, it's a real treat that is worth the trip alone, too. It is the childhood home of the artist Thomas Gainsborough, which was saved from destruction in the late 1950s. It was majorly redeveloped in 2019, fully re-opening in 2022 with new galleries, study areas and visitor amenities. In 2024, it was awarded three RIBA East architecture Awards.

Another treat for photography fans is the on-site permanent camera obscura, giving a 360-degree view of Sudbury, Gainsborough's home town, including the landscapes which inspired him. You can even have a go at operating it yourself – the camera sessions are only available on Thursdays between 1-3pm, so it might make sense to time your visit to the exhibition at the same time if you'd like to have a go.

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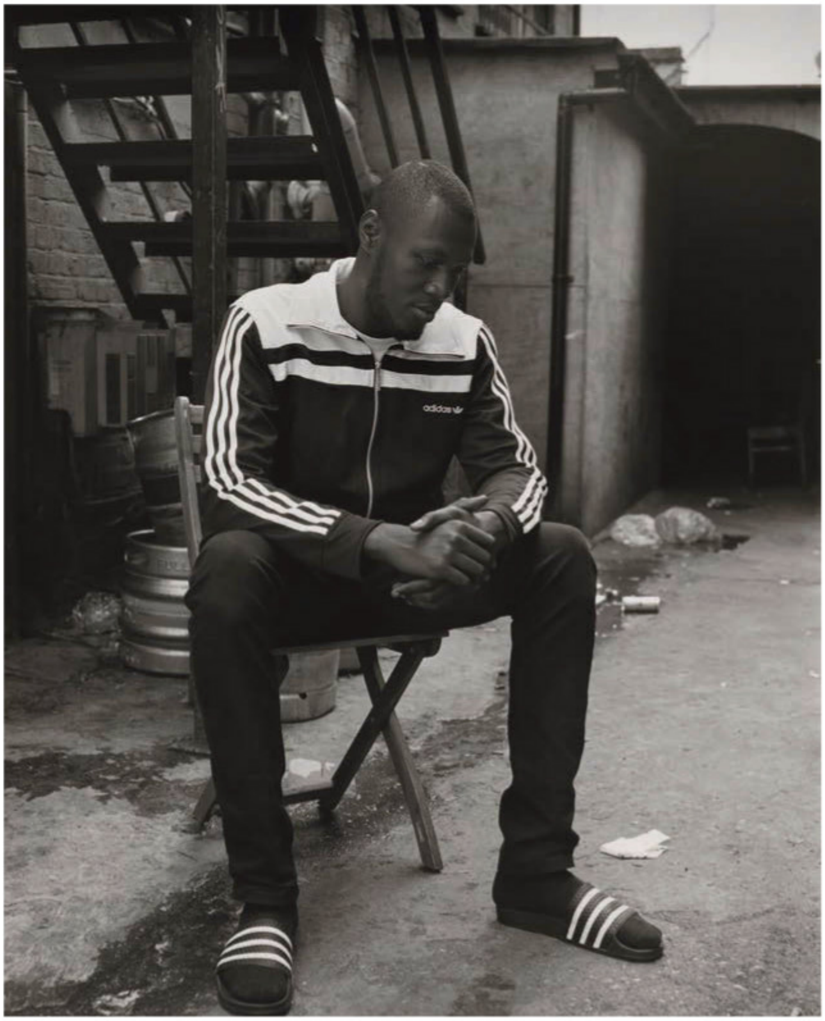

© OLIVIA ROSE

Ellie Gonsalves, as featured in Treats!

Bares It All by Steve Shaw

£259, Treats Media, hardcover, 360 pages

This luxury coffee-table book won't be for those who are on a budget, but it really is a sumptuous 'treat' for those with the readies to pay for it.

It covers 13 years of the US publication, *Treats! Magazine*, and offers 360 pages of large-format beautiful printing to really let you take in the pictures in the best possible way.

Founded in 2011 with the aim of merging high fashion, fine art and sensuality, *Treats! Magazine* aimed to provide a creative outlet and freedom whereby photographers and models would be able to collaborate without restriction, commercial constraints or censorship.

The book also takes the form of memoir and it also goes into plenty of detail about star-studded shoots with some of the biggest-known celebrities in the world.

Speaking of the magazine, Shaw says, 'I wanted to present women in an empowered way, giving them full control of the narrative. I always knew creating a magazine dedicated to nude photography would be controversial, but I could never have foreseen the extraordinary impact it has had. I'm excited to share it with readers worldwide.'

Shaw aims to blend high fashion with fine art

© WILL GREEN

Self-portrait with ECG tags

© WILL GREEN

Untitled from 'Death and Other Belongings'

Death and Other Belongings by Will Green

£40, GOST, hardback, 104 pages,
ISBN: 9781915423597

A study in loss, fear and legacy, this touching project is as beautiful as it is hard-hitting.

Will Green caught Covid and lost both his parents to the virus within the course of just two months. The photographs in the book were made throughout this intense period, where his personal world imploded, just as the whole world was also seemingly doing the same.

As such, although the photographs depict his personal journey through a traumatic moment in time, they also speak to a wider shared social, historic and social experience.

In March 2020, Green was working on a project focusing on his home city of Bath. It was contracting Covid, which then turned into long Covid, which made him turn the project inwards. As a result, he also found himself using the cupboard under the stairs as a darkroom, processing the films in his bathroom.

The photographs in the book take a look at overlooked details which together signal an absence of life, as well as looking at that which is transitory or abstract. The text of the book draws on losing both his parents within a week of each other, and is also poignantly juxtaposed against an extract of a transcript from the first worldwide ProMed email alert to the media about the as-yet-unidentified virus that would go on to be known as Covid-19.

AMERICAN GANGSTER

Olympic Zone, 2007

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safestore
More space for things that matter
Personal and Business storage
Recorder

Goodmayes, 2016

A History of the East End by Chris Dorley Brown

£30, Nouveau Paris, softcover,
ISBN: 9782957207244

A self-taught documentary photographer based in the East End of London, this is Chris Dorley Brown's first monograph and is a retrospective of his career to date.

Taken between 1984 and 2023, the photos chart the many happenings of the East End, with demolitions, transformations, constructions and lockdowns all taking place within the book's pages.

It's a testament to how capitalism and development has transformed, and re-transformed the area. But the pictures themselves are also superb, with each one offering a detailed vignette into the area that keeps you looking for new details each time you look at it.

The design of the book, which is pleasingly minimalist, also serves the pictures well. There are short essays interspersed in the book, which take the form of loose leaves. It's great for not interfering with the pictures, but I must admit, I'm concerned about losing them, or them not ending up back in the right place should they fall out.

Overall, these are some excellent photographs of the East End, and if you have a particular interest in the area you'll love it. If you're more generally interested in street and documentary work, it's also very much worth your time too.

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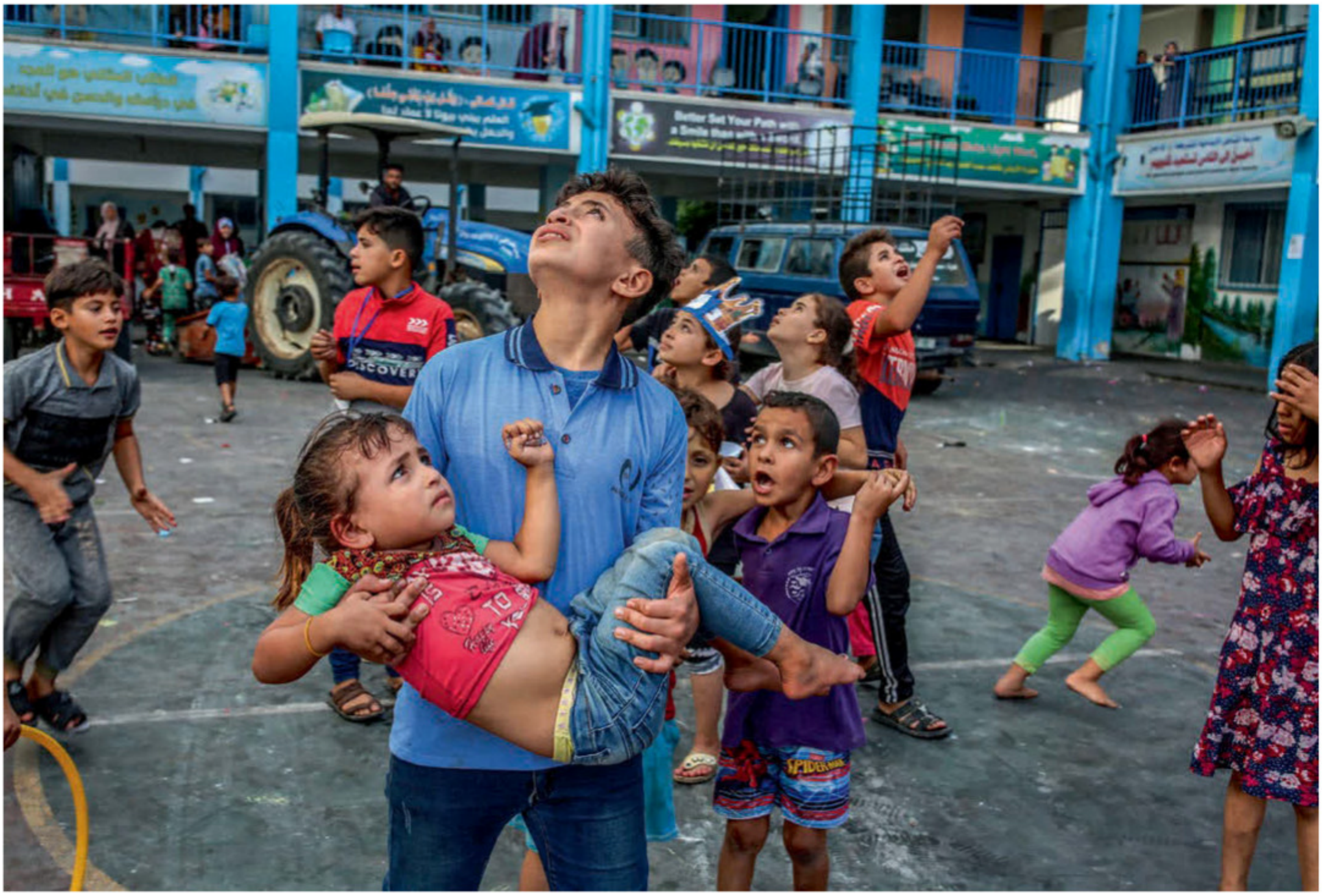


ALL PICTURES © SAMAR ABU ELOUF

Above: Palestinian schoolchildren look skywards at the sound of airstrikes as Israel, vowing to eliminate Hamas, launched an offensive on Gaza

Last breaths

Palestinian photographer Samar Abu Elouf won the RPS Award for Photojournalism 2024 in recognition of sustained excellence or a notable achievement in photojournalism whether in photography or moving image. **Peter Dench** finds out more

It's the photographs of children that get you. Premature babies packed together in intensive care. A shrouded toddler in a morgue mourned by her brother. A child suffering from shrapnel cuts on a filthy bench clutching a packet of candy. A four-year-old whose leg was amputated after shrapnel pierced her left calf watches children on swings in a playground. A 12-year-old twists his face in agony as a doctor treats burns sustained when his home was struck by munition. Children walk through their damaged home after Israeli jets destroyed the building opposite. Children run for cover as bombs fall.

The intimate images of smiling children are equally harrowing. They instinctively want to smile for the camera but it comes out wrong. In one extraordinary image of children playing on a Saturday afternoon at U.N. run school in Gaza City, the scene of relative joy is punctuated by air strikes. A boy carrying his younger sister looks skyward with dread. Another kid wearing a paper crown looks more pensive, perhaps trying to identify the type of plane or missile flying overhead, an education no child should require.

All the images were taken by Palestinian photojournalist Samar Abu Elouf, recipient of the Royal Photographic Society (RPS) Award for Photojournalism 2024. Dan Jones, CEO at the RPS, says, 'The photojournalism award is a new award we introduced this year. Our awards have been around a long time and the reasons for what you would be awarded in 1878 are clearly very different, but we felt it was an important time to introduce an award specifically around photojournalism. In the context of our wider awards, we haven't perhaps awarded as many practitioners of that as we could.'

Skill and defiance

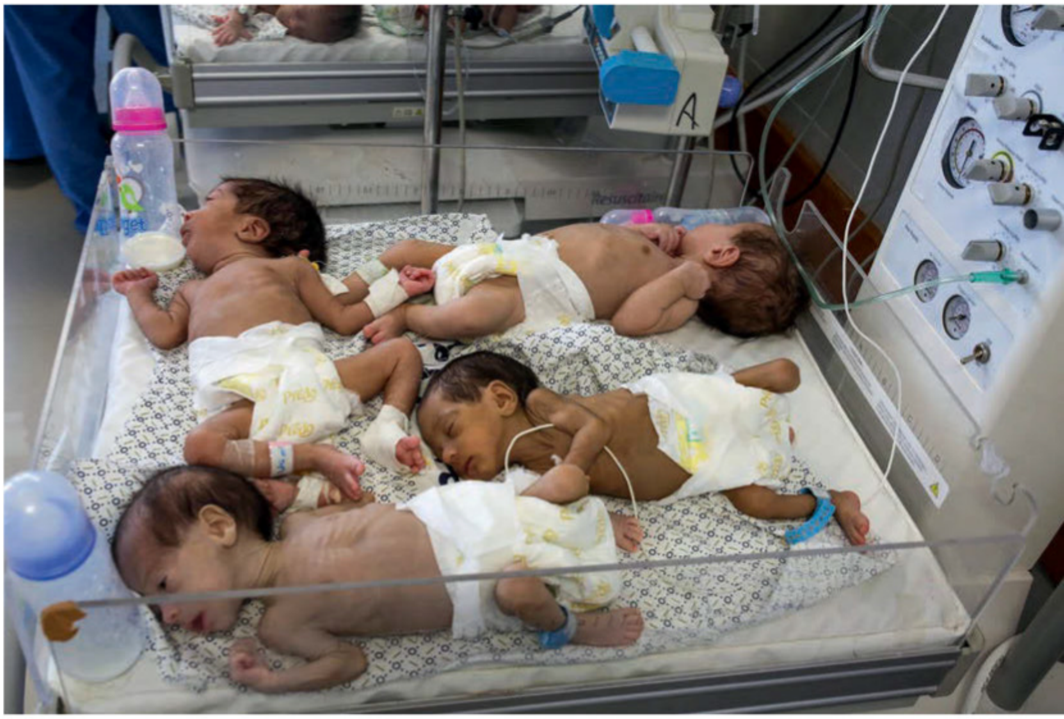
The award is not for a single image or body of work but a career contribution and Abu Elouf's career has been one of skill, stubbornness and defiance. When aged 26, a mother of three (now of four) she was agitated by her situation. In a July 2024 interview with CNN she says, 'When I lived that life, I always felt that something was missing. I was so young and suddenly my life didn't feel like mine any more. I dreamed of studying, of doing something meaningful for myself and my people.'

After dabbling in writing, public relations and accounting, it was photography she found most fulfilling, taking pictures on a mobile phone. She wasn't fully supported by her former husband or either of their families but went ahead anyway. She trained and educated herself in the medium. Her first assignment was covering the 2012 conflict with Israel and went on to document the 2014 50-day war in Gaza.

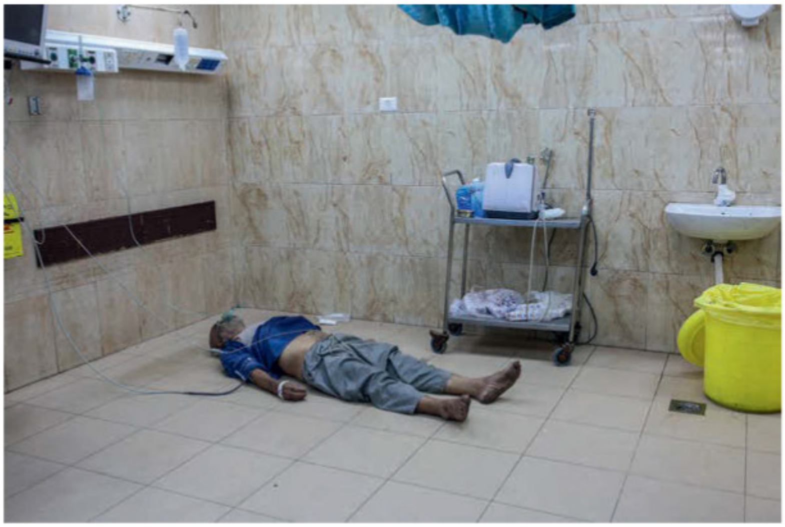
Cooking pot protection

From 2018-19 Abu Elouf reported on the Gaza border protests for Middle Eastern Eye. Lacking protective gear but wanting to identify herself as media, not protester, she strapped a cooking pot to her head for a helmet and taped PRESS on to a blue plastic bag which she wore around her torso. 'I wanted to make sure I was seen as a journalist, not a protester, and I had the right to be protected as such. I became famous in Gaza for that image of me. I went in front of the Israeli soldiers and people laughed, asking me what I cooked for them in the pot, but I couldn't care less. I just took my pictures.' Images of her wearing the makeshift garb went viral. A flak jacket and helmet was subsequently supplied after she applied for support from The Marie Colvin Journalists' Network.

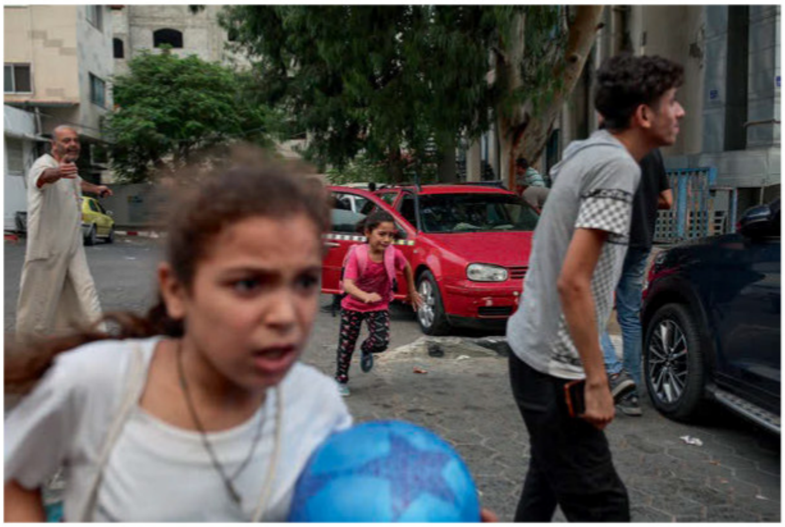
When Israel launched its war in Gaza after Hamas' attack in Israel on 7 October 2023 in which 1,200 people were killed and hundreds taken hostage, Abu Elouf started to document the horror in the most terrifying of situations.



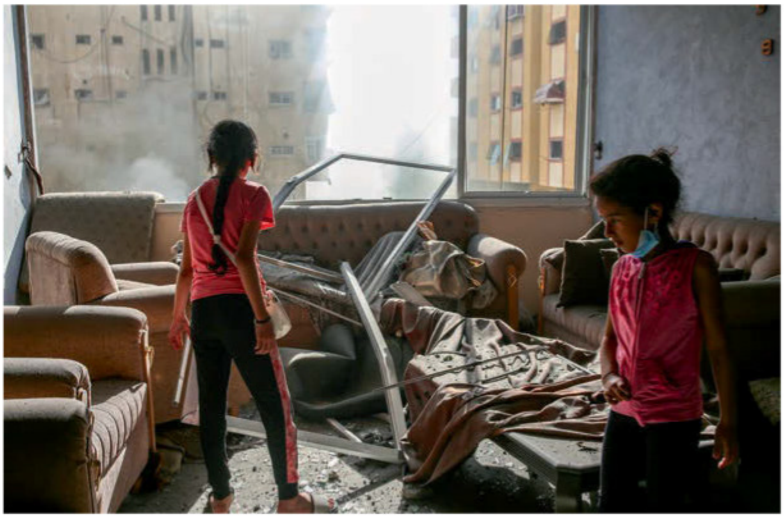
Above: Premature babies who had been in intensive care at the embattled Al-Shifa Hospital in northern Gaza, evacuated across the border to Egypt



Left: A patient lies on the floor of the al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al Balah. Israeli attacks left severe shortages of medical supplies



Left: Children run for cover as bombs fall near the Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City



Left: Children walk through their damaged home after Israeli jets destroyed the building adjacent to theirs in Gaza City

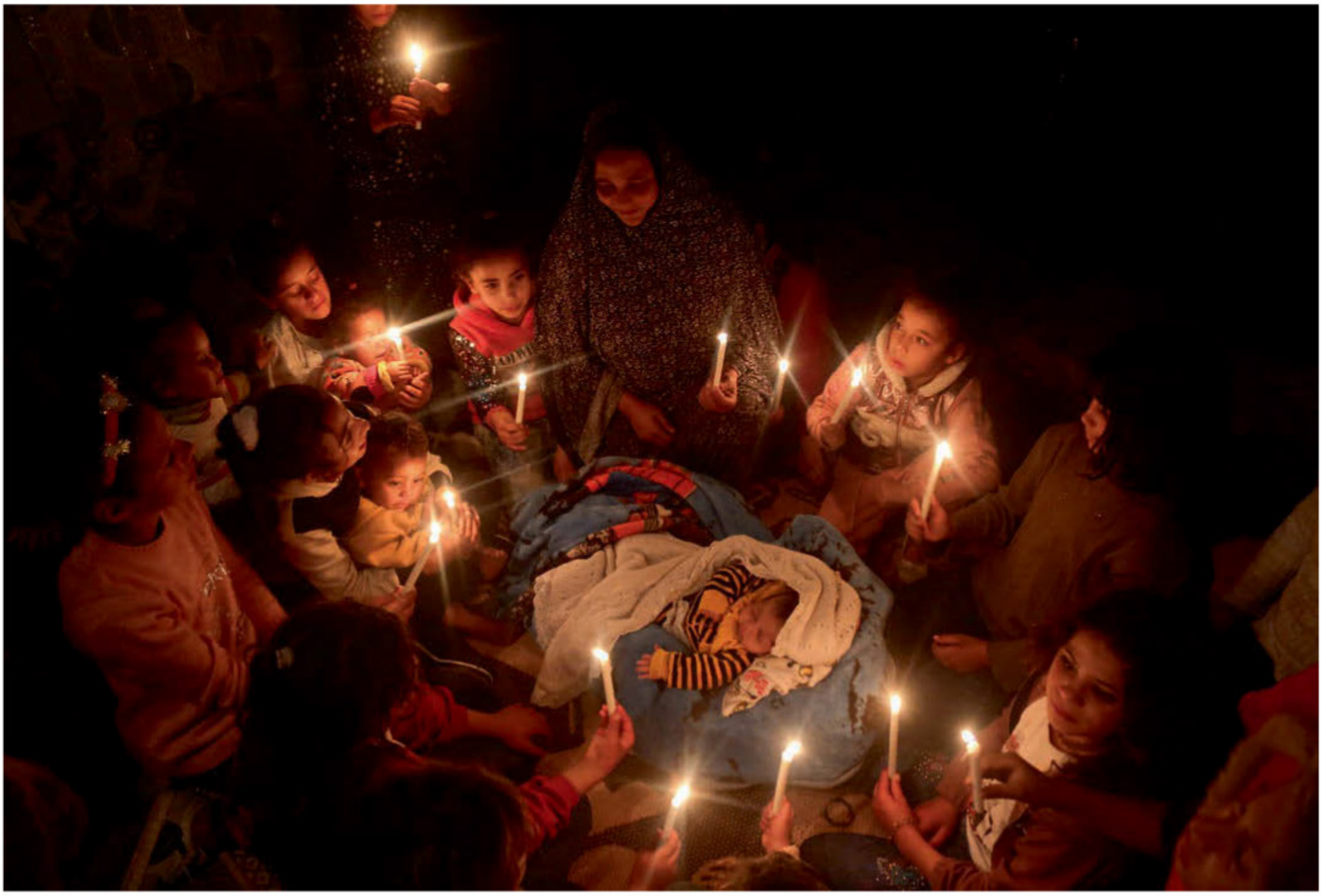
She took pictures of corpses of all ages stacked on top of each other. Her home was burned and bombed. She slept on hospital floors or the back of her vehicle. She worked with an infected lung, during power cuts and blackouts, often on an empty stomach. She lost family members and sustained memories she can't forget.

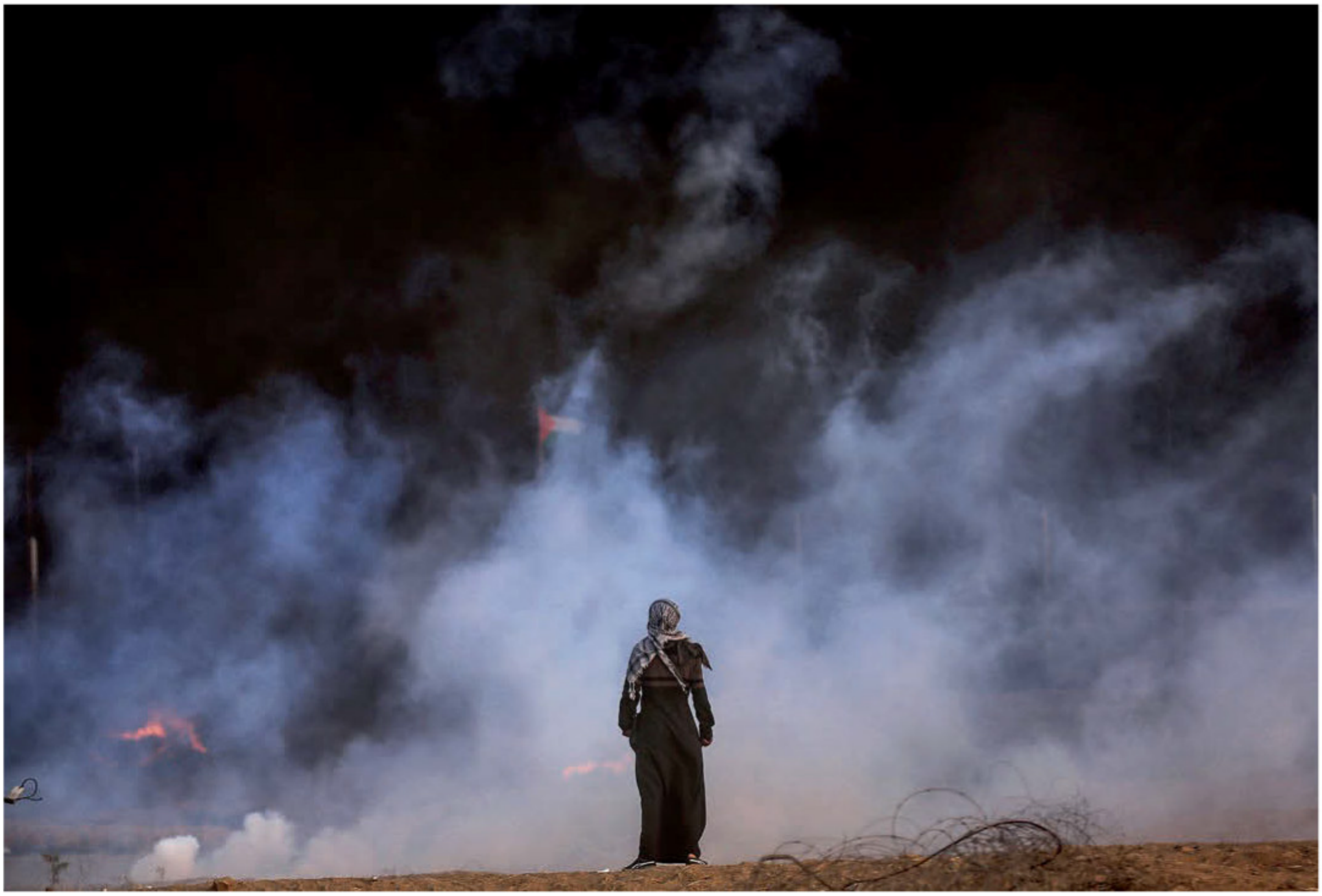
Her photographs have achieved critical acclaim, including the 2024 Anja Niedringhaus Courage in Photojournalism Award for her work documenting the October 7 conflict. Her winning portfolio, Gaza Under Attack, includes a series of 12 images commissioned by and featured in *The New York Times* (where she has been working as a freelancer since 2021). On receiving the award (created in honour of German Associated Press photojournalist Anja Niedringhaus killed in 2014 in Afghanistan, she said, 'I am honoured to receive this award, to be recognised for my work in Gaza, and to follow in the footsteps of Anja's courage. Still, it is hard to celebrate given the ongoing tragedy in my homeland. My work as a photojournalist taught me to respect the humanity of all people with fortitude and patience. The camera has made me a strong woman, and I will continue working and taking photos until my last breath.'

Her achievements also include the prestigious George Polk Award for her documentation of the conflict, solidifying her status as one of the most distinguished photojournalists today.

The war in Gaza marks the deadliest period for her profession in modern history. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), as of 17 December 2024 CPJ's preliminary investigations showed at least 141 journalists and media workers were among the more than tens of thousands killed in Gaza, the West Bank, Israel, and Lebanon since

Below: The celebration of a new baby in Gaza





Above: A demonstrator stands among smoke during a Gaza-Israel border protest in 2018

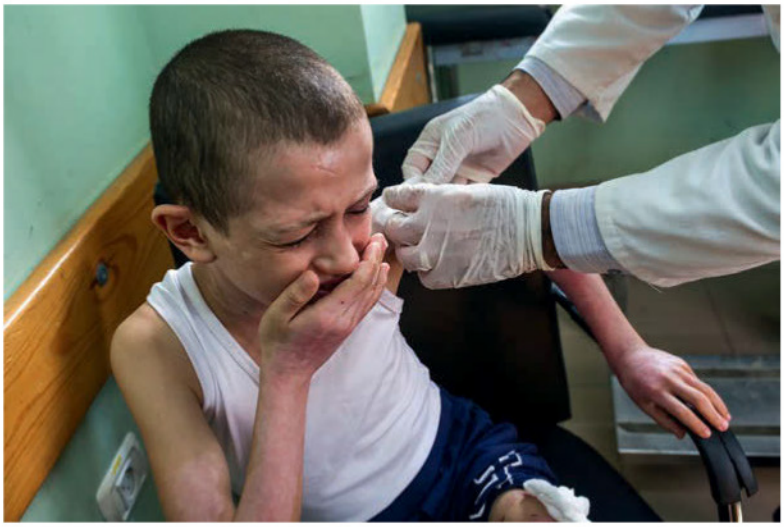
the war began. Most of them Palestinian. Journalists in Gaza face particularly high risks as they try to cover the conflict, including devastating Israeli airstrikes, famine, the displacement of 90% of Gaza's population and the destruction of 80% of its buildings. War is personal. When Anadolu Agency photographer and friend of Samar, Mohammed Alaloul, learned that several family members including four of his children were killed in an Israeli airstrike, she rushed to be with him.

Wielding a camera close in battle has always been a dangerous occupation. Photojournalists are easily identified by their equipment and at constant risk of revealing their location. Gaza has accelerated a trend already witnessed in Syria and Ukraine where conflict photographers come under attack. British photojournalist Tim Hetherington was killed by shrapnel from either a mortar shell or an RPG fired by Libyan forces while covering the 2011 Libyan civil war.

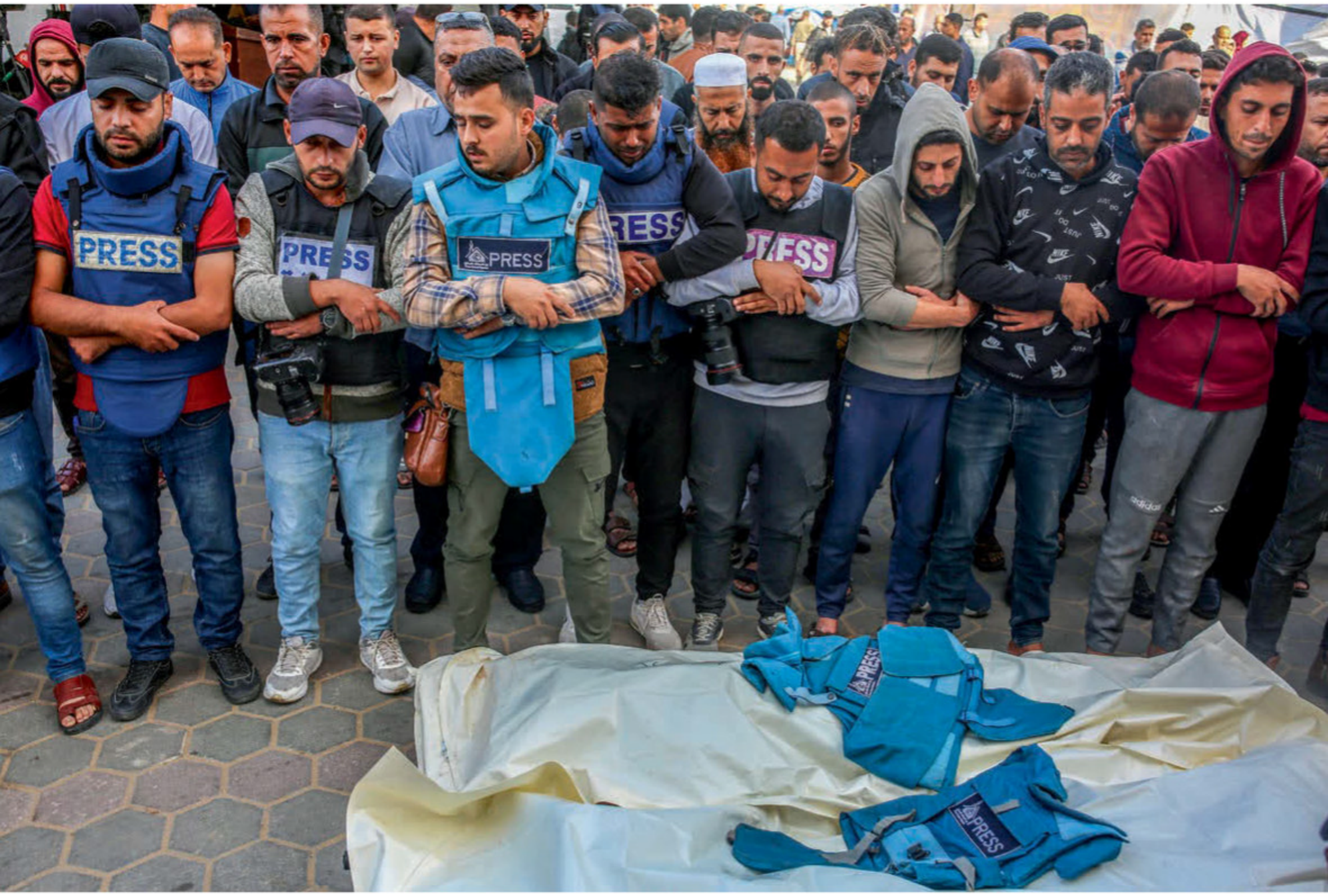
Abu Elouf has experienced a shift in behaviour around her. She told CNN, 'In the past, civilians would stay close to journalists because they felt safer near us. Now they stay as far away as possible. If I'm in line at a bakery or an ATM, strangers on the street are scared to stand anywhere near me. They say to each other: "She's a journalist, stay away from her. They might kill her while we're close by."'

On the flip side, photojournalists have developed to embody the power of digital activism, whose work can galvanise millions. Palestinian photojournalist from Gaza, Motaz Azaiza, has more followers on Instagram (17.4m) than US President Joe Biden (17.1m).

Jones hopes in some small way the RPS can introduce and amplify Abu Elouf's photography to new audiences and it seems to be working, having been picked



Left: Mohamed Abu Rteinah cries in pain as a doctor tends to his burns. The 12-year-old boy was injured by a munition that struck his family's home in the southern city of Rafah



up by several outlets. The *RPS Journal* awards special issue (January-March 2025 Vol 165 / No 1) dedicates eight pages. 'We've got all these conflicts going on and clearly photojournalism is more vital in many respects. Wherever you stand on these complex conflicts, her work has showcased the ordinary people, particularly the children, caught up in it, the devastation they've faced. It's that stark truth stripped of any of the bias and opinion we're so used to. I think that makes the work so powerful and it was something that came through when we discussed the award in the awards committee.'

The awards committee is drawn from within the RPS structure and staff team and a different set of experts from the photography industry. They meet, review and reward. Once the award has been granted, the individual is notified and asked if they wish to accept.

What wasn't a critical point of discussion was Abu Elouf's Palestinian heritage. Jones continues, 'I think if we were discussing those kinds of issues in the context of photography awards it would be wrong so it was the quality of work. The urgency of the message and how much that conflict has played on everybody obviously plays a role on how you perceive her work. Certainly in my role as CEO, we don't just sit around looking at politically what's the right option so much.'

Despite a lifelong vow to never leave Gaza, Abu Elouf reluctantly accepted help from the *New York Times* to evacuate with her children to Qatar, filling her days giving talks about the war, advocating for her colleagues still in Gaza, learning English and helping her children navigate an unfamiliar life.

Resilience

Samar Abu Elouf's path has not been easy. Her ability to work independently and avoid political affiliations has elevated her to international acclaim. Her photographs tell stories of resilience, hope, and humanity amidst unimaginable suffering. In time, hopefully she will be able to return home and document a brighter future, where children's smiles are unclouded by fear. AP

Above: Palestinian journalists pray over the bodies of colleagues killed in an Israeli raid

Abu Elouf wears a makeshift helmet and vest, 2015

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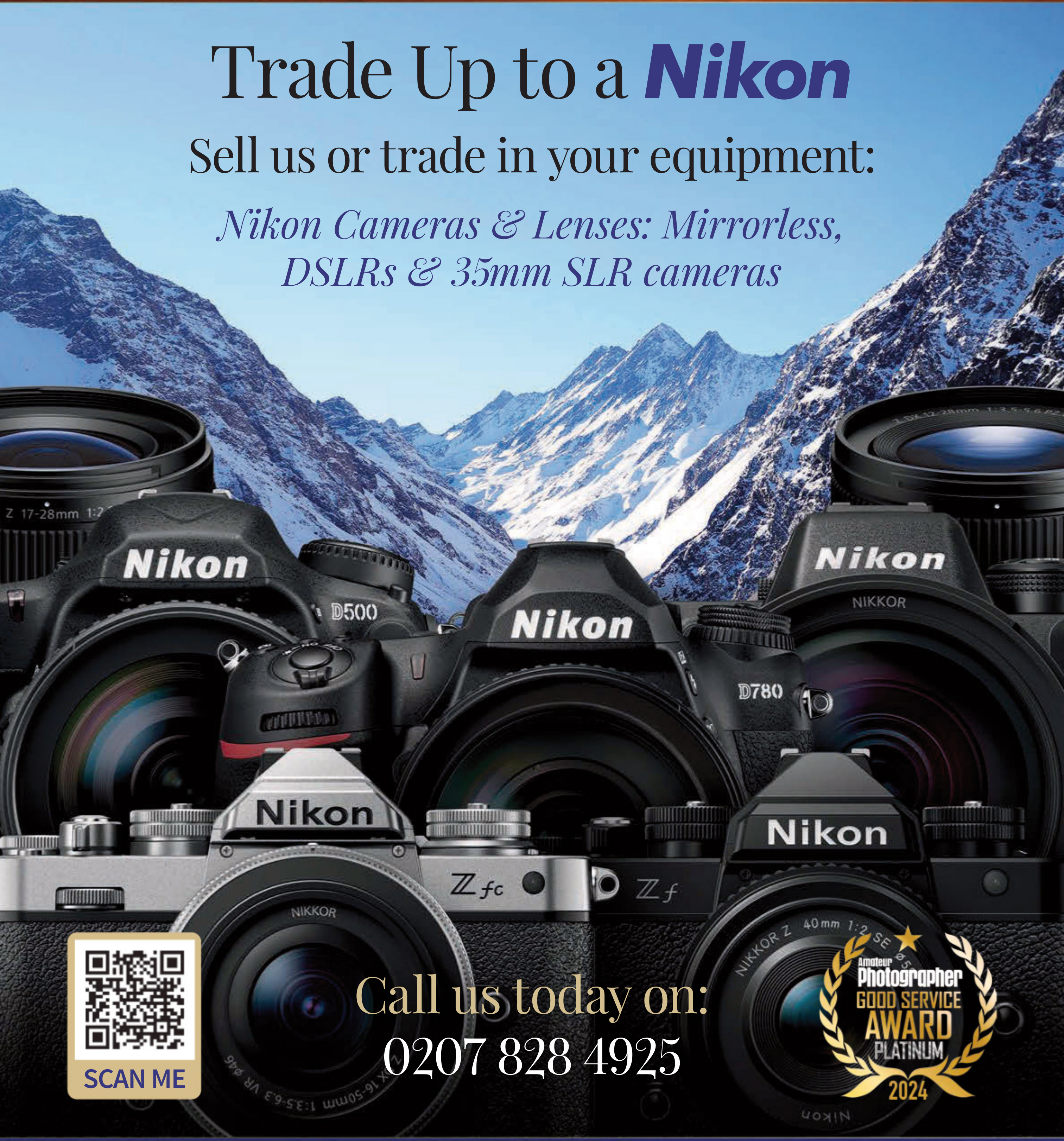
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Spectacularly absurd

A brand new book celebrates the often surreal, but always spectacular, work of Weegee (The Famous). **Amy Davies** spoke to one of its authors to find out more

Born Ascher Fellig in what is now Ukraine, Weegee 'the Famous', is one of the best known Magnum photographers, primarily producing work in the USA in the middle of the 20th century.

Weegee moved to New York in 1909 with his family, starting work as a freelance photographer in 1935. He became particularly well-known for his work at crime scenes, with a stark, flashlit black & white aesthetic that remains striking even today.

A self-taught photographer with no formal training, his eye for the astonishing, the absurd and the 'spectacle' was remarkable. His instinct for knowing what would sell was vital for a freelancer, and looking through his extensive back catalogue you really get a feel for a photographer who turned up, got the job done, and moved on to the next thing.

In *Weegee: The Society of the Spectacle*, which is newly published this year, we get a look back across his whole career, demonstrating how the spectacle became the unifying theme throughout his work. There are more than 130 images included in the volume, some of which are rarely seen.

As well as his documentary work, there's a closer look at some of his surrealist portraits, as well as his last great series taken on the set of Stanley Kubrick's 1964 film, *Dr Strangelove*.

All of this is put into context by interesting essays that explore the themes and motivations of this extraordinary photographer, and it makes for a fascinating read. I asked one of the authors, Clément Chéroux, to share some insights into putting the book together.

AP: Why do you think Weegee and his work continues to resonate with modern audiences?

CC: Weegee was a pioneer in photographic reportage at a time – the 1930s and 1940s – when illustrated press was inventing its own codes. He developed a number of techniques for finding his subject and making it attractive that are still relevant today.

AP: How do you think Weegee has influenced documentary and news photography?

CC: He had this brilliant idea of photographing people watching fires, crimes or car accidents. Today, it seems very commonplace, but at the time it was very innovative. He was one of the first to

Left: A young man injured in a car crash on Upper Fifth Avenue, New York asks for a cigarette before the ambulance arrives. © Weegee Archive / International Center of Photography, New York / Getty Images

Above: Tenement Sleeping During Heat Spell, Lower East Side, New York, 23 May 1941 © WeeGee Archive / International Center of Photography, New York

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criticise the way American press turned everything into a spectacle.

AP: Do you think the fact that Weegee turned the camera on himself, and developed himself as a celebrity (the Famous) is what makes or made him so compelling to audiences of his own time, as well as modern ones?

CC: Weegee was a rather facetious character. As early as 1938, he produced a stamp bearing the inscription 'Weegee the Famous', with which he stamped the back of his prints. At that time, he wasn't famous. He became famous in 1945 with the publication of his book *Naked City*. This stamp was a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy.

AP: How did you know what to include in the book – and what to leave out? Was it hard to make those kind of decisions?

CC: Making an exhibition of photographs requires research. In preparation for this exhibition and the book, I reviewed all the photographs taken and printed by Weegee, some 30,000 of them. I looked at or re-read all his books, and all those written about him. Then curating an exhibition is a bit like writing a text: you carefully choose your words and their place in the sentence.

AP: Weegee describes some of his work as a 'great social document'. To what extent would you agree with that, and do you think his position as the child of Ukrainian Jewish immigrants is what gave him the required insight and empathy to capture such a document?

CC: Weegee wasn't politically committed, but he had a real class consciousness. Coming from a family of Ukrainian Jewish immigrants who settled in the United States in the early 20th century, he knew what it meant to belong to a social class that had to struggle to subsist. He used this knowledge for his photographs. For example, he often recounted how, as a child, during the heatwaves of New York summers, he and his siblings would sleep on fire escapes in order to escape the heat. When, during a particularly hot summer in 1938, he wanted to illustrate this subject for his newspaper, he knew exactly where and how to do it. His photographs are social documents in this sense.

AP: Why was now a good time to publish this book? What has been the reception and reaction to the book so far?

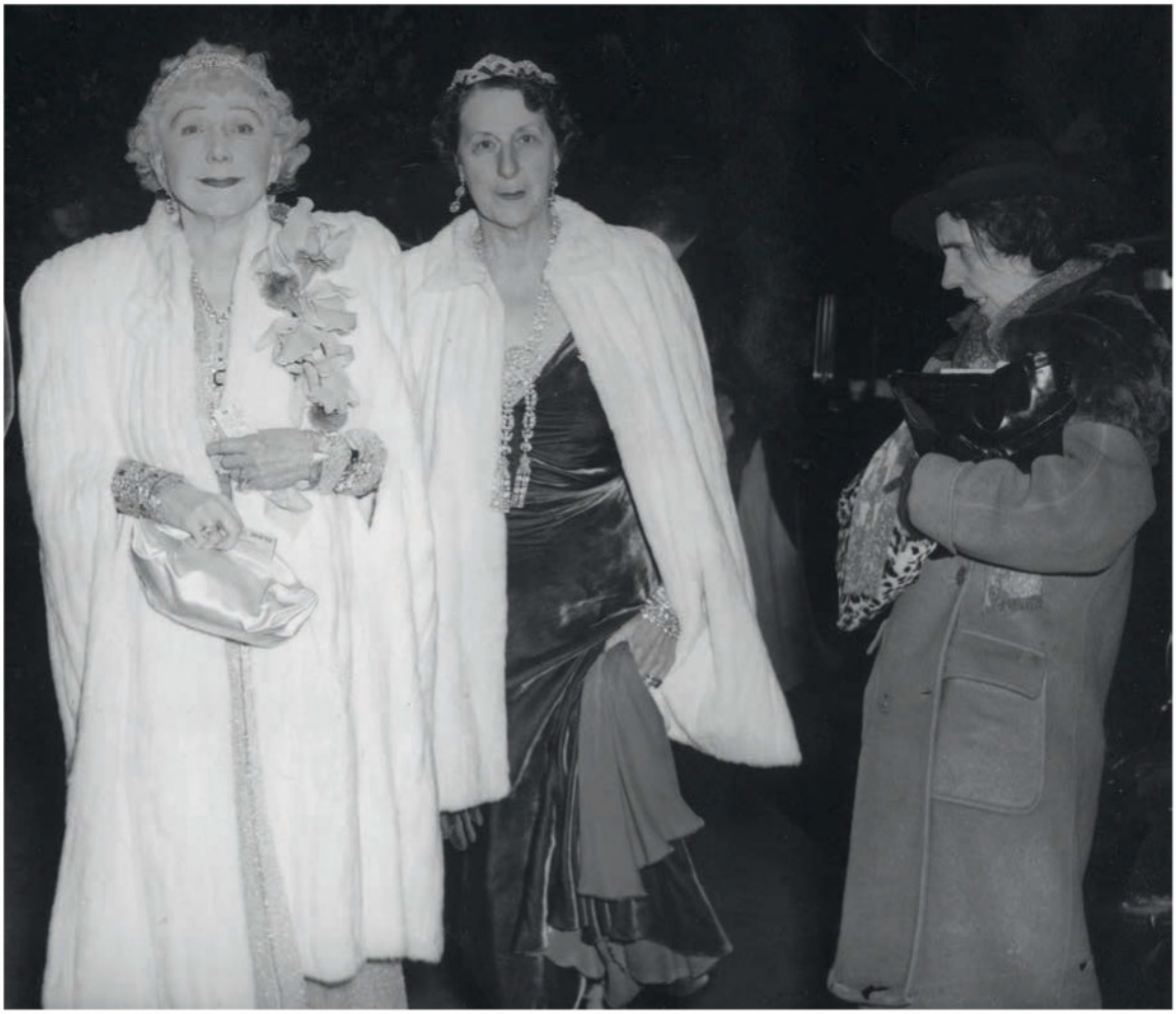
CC: The response to the Weegee exhibition and book has been extraordinary. In an age when social media has pushed the staging of the self to a kind of paroxysm, it's particularly useful to reflect on the place that spectacle has taken in our society.

Opposite, clockwise from top:

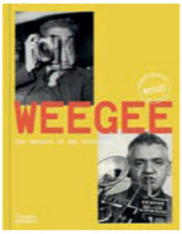
Charles Sodokoff and Arthur Webber use their hats to hide their faces in a police van © WeeGee / International Center of Photography / Getty Images

Drowning Victim, Coney Island, c. 1940 © WeeGee Archive / International Center of Photography

WeeGee at the Typewriter in the Trunk of a 1938 Chevrolet, c. 1943 © WeeGee Archive / International Center of Photography



Left: American socialite Marie Miller Kavanaugh and Lady Decies arrive at the New York Metropolitan opera, laden with jewels, November 23, 1943 © WeeGee Archive / International Center of Photography / Getty Images



Weegee: The Society of the Spectacle is published by Thames and Hudson and is available now. RRP £45. ISBN: 9780500029121

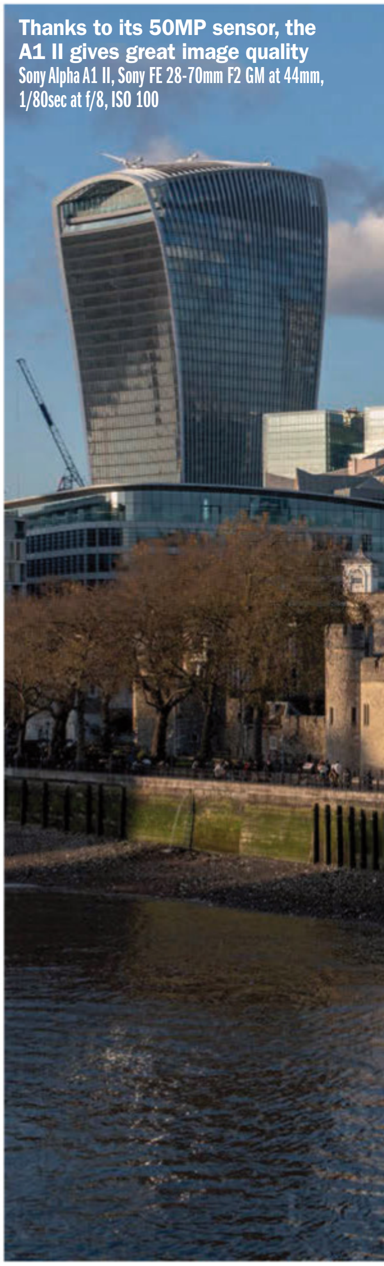
At a glance

£6,300 body only

- 50MP full-frame stacked-CMOS sensor
- 30 frames per second shooting
- 8K 30p, 4K 120p video recording
- 5-axis in-body stabilisation: 8.5-stop centre, 7.0-stop edge
- 9.44m-dot, 0.9x, 120fps OLED viewfinder
- 3.2in, 2.1m-dot 4-axis multi-angle LCD

Sony Alpha A1 II

Sony's latest professional flagship places the speed and resolution of the original A1 into an updated body. **Andy Westlake** discovers whether this is enough to stay ahead in a rapidly advancing market



Thanks to its 50MP sensor, the A1 II gives great image quality
Sony Alpha A1 II, Sony FE 28-70mm F2 GM at 44mm, 1/80sec at f/8, ISO 100

For and against

- + Impressive image quality
- + Rapid shooting speeds
- + Superb viewfinder and screen
- + Excellent autofocus system
- + Auto subject-detection option (finally)
- – Over-complicated autofocus setup
- – Very expensive

Data file

Sensor	50.1MP stacked CMOS, 36x24mm
Output size	8640x5760
Focal length magnification	1.0x
Lens mount	Sony E
Shutter speeds	1/8000sec - 30sec (mechanical); 1/32,000sec - 30sec (electronic)
Sensitivity	ISO 100-32,000 (standard); ISO 50-102,400 (extended)
Exposure modes	PASM, Auto
Metering	Multi, centre-weighted, spot, average, highlight
Exposure comp	+/-5EV in 0.3EV steps
Continuous shooting	30fps (electronic shutter); 10fps (mechanical)
Screen	3.2in, 2.1m-dot 4-axis multi-angle
Viewfinder	9.44m-dot, 0.9x OLED
AF points	759
Video	8K 30fps; 4K 120fps
External mic	3.5mm stereo, MI shoe
Memory card	2x CFexpress A/UHS-II SD
Power	NP-FZ100 Li-ion
Battery life	420 (EVF), 520 (LCD)
Dimensions	136.1x96.9x82.9mm
Weight	743g

ALL PRICES ARE APPROXIMATE STREET PRICES

When Sony launched its original Alpha 1 at the start of 2021, it offered an unprecedented combination of resolution and speed. This was a camera that could shoot 50MP images at 30 frames per second and record 8K 30p video. Now the firm has transplanted these features, along with all its latest technologies, into a hugely upgraded body design borrowed from last year's sports-focused A9 III. The resultant Alpha A1 II is, without doubt, the best camera Sony has yet made.

When the A1 first appeared, it felt like a ground-breaking product, as the first camera of its type to work convincingly for any kind of shooting, either stills or video. But the market has moved on significantly since then, and its successor finds itself up against a couple of very impressive rivals, in the shape of the Nikon Z8 and Canon EOS R5 Mark II. Both can do essentially all the same things, but for a lot less money than the £6,300 Sony wants for the A1 II.

Naturally the A1 II gains a few new tricks of its own, although arguably, nothing that clearly makes it stand apart. Sony has finally added an Auto mode for its subject detection system, plus a Pre-capture option for burst shooting. But both Canon and Nikon offer these features, too. So the question is, does the Sony A1 II jump back to the top of its class, or has it now been overtaken by its competitors?

Features

In terms of its core photographic specifications, the A1 II offers much the same as the A1 did. It's built around the same 50MP full-frame stacked CMOS sensor which offers a sensitivity range of ISO 100-32,000 as standard, with extended ISO 50-102,400 options also available. The mechanical shutter maxes out at 1/8000sec, while the electronic shutter extends this even further to 1/32,000sec, and you get a very useful 1/400sec flash sync, too. That stacked sensor means you don't have to worry too much about rolling subject distortion.

For shooting bursts, you get 10 frames per second using the mechanical shutter and an impressive 30fps with the electronic shutter. Both come with continuous autofocus and subject tracking while shooting full-resolution raw. Sony promises a buffer of at least 80 frames for uncompressed raw and JPEGs together, rising to 240 frames with compressed raw.

When it comes to video, alongside the headline 8K recording at 30fps, you also get 4K 120fps with a 1.1x crop, and 4K at 60fps from the full sensor width. Along with Sony's standard S-Log 3 and S-Cinetone options, the camera can store 16 LUTs for custom colour output. Subject detection AF is available during video recording.

Compared to the original A1, the biggest update is the addition of Sony's AI processor, which brings a significant boost to the camera's autofocus capabilities. It also promises improved exposure, colour, and auto white balance.

In a long-overdue move, Sony has finally brought its subject detection system up to date, with a new Auto mode that understands the subject type automatically, rather than needing it to be set in advance. Otherwise, the subject detection is the same as on the A9 III, being able to recognise humans, animals, birds, cars, trains, airplanes, and insects. Sony is promising a 30% - 50% improvement in subject detection performance over the original A1, thanks to the AI processor.

The A1 II also gains Sony's best-ever in-body image stabilisation. It's rated for 8.5 stops of shake reduction in the centre of the image, and 7.0 stops at the edge. There are updates for video stabilisation too, with both Active Mode IS and Framing Stabiliser IS on board.

Sony has included various multi-shot modes, promising

Subject detection AF lets you concentrate on capturing the peak moment of movement
Sony A1 II, FE 28-70mm F2 GM at 35mm, 1/200sec at f/8, ISO 200

increased resolution or decreased noise. Unfortunately, these don't produce composite files in-camera, but require processing on a computer in Sony's Imaging Edge software. They're probably best seen as niche options for special situations, and arguably exist more for marketing purposes than real-world use.

More usefully, though, you don't have to shoot huge 50MP files all the time. Instead, you can record both raw and JPEG files at reduced resolutions of 21MP or 12MP. You can also switch to a 21MP APS-C crop mode, which can be especially useful for sports and wildlife shooters.

Build and handling

To all intents and purposes, the A1 II uses the same body design as the A9 III. This means you get a very similar control layout to the original A1, including all of the same buttons and dials in all the same places. But the new version also gains the various updates and refinements Sony has introduced in the meantime.

Most obviously, the body is wider and boasts a much-improved handgrip, with more space between the grip and mount. This means it handles much better with the large lenses that are likely to be used on this kind of camera. It's also much easier to use when you're wearing gloves in cold weather. However, the flipside is that it no longer has such a clear size advantage over its competitors. At 136x97x 83mm and 743g, it's much the same size as the Canon EOS R5 Mark II (however, the Nikon Z8 is noticeably bulkier).

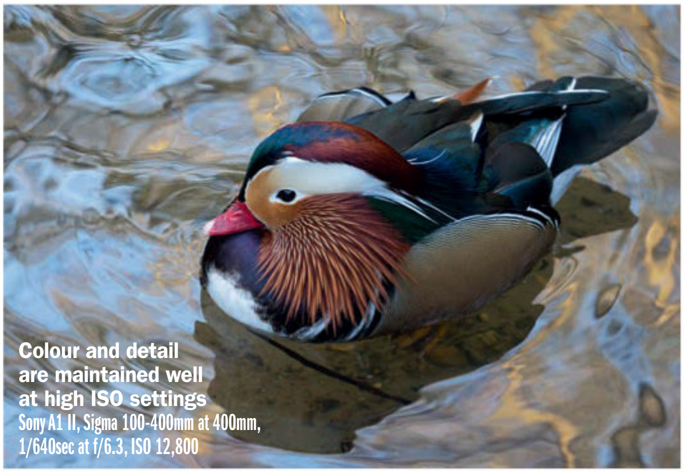
Elsewhere, the exposure compensation dial is now unmarked and rotates freely, so it can be re-allocated to other settings. A separate switch beneath the exposure mode dial selects between still, video, and S&Q (slow and quick motion) shooting. There's also a new C5 button on the front that's set to engage speed boost during continuous shooting.

No fewer than four electronic dials are onboard for changing exposure settings, and that's not even counting the aperture ring that's found on most recent Sony lenses. Unusually for this kind of camera, there's a conventional mode dial on top, which has three custom positions alongside the familiar PASM modes. There's also a fully-automatic 'green' mode. On the top left, you get physical dials for selecting focus and drive modes, each with a locking button to prevent accidental operation.

A large AF-ON button is placed above the AF selector joystick, and you can customise it to activate tracking too, which I find really useful. Meanwhile the video button is tucked away next to the viewfinder. All the controls are highly customisable, so it should be possible to get the camera working the way you want.

One point worth considering, though, is that those AF and drive mode switches complicate using custom modes to switch quickly between camera setups. You always have to ensure those switches are set correctly, too.

Sony's menu system is still as huge and incomprehensible as always, with fully 64 pages of options. It also includes some horrible abbreviations that are impossible to parse (Cnt Sht Spd Bst Settings, anyone?). It's in serious need of simplification, and as with all cameras, would benefit massively from some kind of search function. It's well worth compiling any options you may wish to change often into the custom My Menu. Thankfully this is an unusually straightforward process – just press the delete key when you have a menu item selected.



Colour and detail are maintained well at high ISO settings
Sony A1 II, Sigma 100-400mm at 400mm, 1/640sec at f/6.3, ISO 12,800

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Overall, though, the A1 II still just slightly lacks the sheer refinement that comes from Nikon and Canon's decades of working with professional photographers. I tested it immediately after reviewing the EOS R5 Mark II, and it's noticeable how many small quality-of-life design details favour that camera. For example, its lens release button is much larger, making it easier to swap lenses in a hurry, and Canon includes a dedicated button for rating images in playback. These are little things, but they do make your life easier.

Viewfinder and screen

One area where the A1 II is still indisputably class-leading lies with its viewfinder. It's large and detailed, with a 9.4m-dot OLED panel and 0.9x magnification. It's also free of any blackout during continuous shooting. Sony now even includes a second eyecup in the box, which is much deeper and made of a soft silicone material to block stray light better. It's a real improvement.

The A1 II also incorporates the same excellent screen design as the A9 III and A7R V. It's a 3.2in, 2.1m-dot LCD that combines both tilting and side-hinged articulation mechanisms. This gives the best of both worlds – you can point the screen in almost any direction you like for shooting at awkward angles, while still having it tilt up and down behind the camera for waist-level or overhead shooting.

Sony previews colour, exposure and depth-of-field by default. This means you get a very good idea of how your images are going to turn out. A comprehensive array of viewing aids is available, too. You can display a small live histogram and electronic levels, although not at the same time. But there's no option to get the viewfinder to emulate an optical finder, which both Canon and Nikon offer.

Autofocus

With its stacked CMOS sensor and AI processor, it almost goes without saying that the A1 II's autofocus is exceptional. With static subjects, it focuses instantly, silently, and perfectly accurately, no matter where the subject is within the frame. With moving subjects, it'll lock on and follow them reliably.

Sony's subject recognition is as near-magical as ever, at least when using the pre-set subject modes. It understands people, animals, birds, insects, cars, trains and airplanes, and has no problem with keeping track of even small, erratic subjects such as birds in flight. It doesn't necessarily need Sony's own lenses, either; I used the affordable Sigma 100-400mm F5-6.3 DG DN OS and still got a high hit-rate. But while this kind of autofocus felt ground-breaking on the original A1, now it seems almost unremarkable – the other cameras at this level have caught up, too.

While Sony's new Auto option generally works well, in my experience it gave a surprising number of false positives. For example, it confidently drew subject detection boxes around such things as Tower Bridge or an oak tree. With the latter, I established that the camera thought it was an insect, which suggests the system has no sense of scale.

In a way, this is just quibbling; the camera still focused on the subject I wanted it to, and you can always turn subject detection off when you don't need it. You can also disable certain subject types in Auto mode, which can help focus the camera's attention down on the things you want to shoot. But then again, you don't need to do this with Canon and Nikon's subject detection systems, because they are much less over-complicated in the first place.

Performance

As we'd expect from a top-of-the-line professional camera, the A1 II performs superbly while shooting. It's ready to shoot the moment you flick the power switch and responds instantly to all inputs. The mechanical shutter is nice and quiet, too, firing with just a soft, unobtrusive clunk. If you want the camera to operate completely silently, you can switch to the electronic shutter with little image-quality penalty.

There's nothing to complain about regarding

Focal points

Sony has placed the sensor from the original A1 into a body that's near-identical to the Alpha 9 III

Eyecup

While the camera comes fitted with a standard eyecup, a new, deeper, soft silicone option is also included in the box.

Power

Sony's standard FZ100 battery is notionally rated for 420 frames with the EVF and 520 with the LCD, but you can get many more shots than that when shooting bursts. It can be charged via USB-C and a USB dual battery charger comes as standard.

Vertical grip

The A1 II is compatible with the same VG-C5 vertical grip that was introduced with the A9 III. It holds two batteries and boasts a full set of duplicate controls for vertical shooting.

82.9mm
SONY
C2
C1
α1 II

Connectors

On the side, there's a comprehensive set of ports: microphone, headphone, USB-C, full-size HDMI, RJ 45 ethernet, Sony micro-USB multi-connector, and a PC flash sync socket.

Storage

There are two card slots, each of which can accept either UHS-II SDs, or the faster CFexpress Type A media.

MI shoe

Sony's multi-interface hot shoe accepts both flash units, and Sony's own microphones without needing a cable.

96.9mm
136.1mm
C3
MENU
AF-ON
AEL
Fn
DISP
ISO
C4

battery life. Sony specifies 420 shots per charge using the viewfinder, but this is using the CIPA standard test, which is representative of taking single shots at a time. However, this is a camera where you'll probably spend just as much time in burst mode. In this kind of mixed scenario with single frames and bursts, I got as many as 900 shots per charge. Replacement FZ100 batteries are easy to find and reasonably affordable, too.

Continuous shooting performance is, of course, remarkable. Even if you use a UHS-II SD card, and shoot full-resolution raw and Fine JPEG files together, the camera will happily deliver bursts of over 100 frames at 30fps before pausing or slowing down. Switch to a CFexpress card, and it'll fire off about 150 frames at 30fps, before first throttling back to 15fps for another 50-odd frames, and then settling down to 10fps indefinitely.

Of course, few people want, or need to shoot this fast for this long. Aside from anything else, sorting through all the files is a nightmare. But at times, the capability can be genuinely useful. I was lucky enough to get to shoot a Premier League football match between Manchester City and Nottingham Forest, courtesy of Sony UK. The A1 II's combination of speed and resolution allowed me to experiment with shooting wide – sometimes extremely wide – and cropping heavily after the event. I'm not a sports photographer, but the camera's capabilities meant I managed to capture all three goals scored on the night.

In the less glamorous surroundings of my local park, I was also able to record precise moments of action, such as with birds squabbling or touching down on water. In short, the A1 II helps you capture exactly the moment you want with ease, and with lots of leeway for cropping. For sports and wildlife, this can be invaluable.

To get the best performance, though, you need to shoot in Sony's compressed raw format. However, this comes with a risk of posterization in very dark tones, so it's better to use uncompressed raw whenever you might encounter extreme dynamic range, such as for landscapes. Thankfully, you can set up custom modes so they record different raw file types, and even use different memory card slots. So you could have a sports/action mode sending compressed raws to CFexpress, and a studio/landscape mode that records uncompressed raw to SD when you don't need the same speed.

In-body image stabilisation is crucial with this kind of camera, as it helps you to get the most from that high-resolution sensor without having to worry too much about keeping shutter speeds high to counter camera shake. Here, the A1 II's IBIS system is very capable indeed. Using the superb FE 28-70mm F2 GM lens, I was able to get consistently sharp images handheld at shutter speeds in the vicinity of a second. Given somewhere to rest my elbows, I could get entirely usable results with even longer exposure times around 2.5 seconds. This allows you to shoot such things as night-time cityscapes without necessarily needing a tripod.

As with the A9 III, I was generally very impressed by Sony's metering and white balance. On the whole, the camera does a great job of protecting any highlights from blowing out and losing detail irretrievably. Likewise, the auto white balance system gives a reliable starting point for getting your colour right, with very few of the colour casts that used to bedevil older Sony models.

Sony's default Standard colour mode is tuned very much for accuracy. It's pleasant enough, and the camera is capable of producing perfectly acceptable JPEG output. But it doesn't quite have the punch and impact of some other brands' colour modes. Like other recent Sony cameras, there's a set of 'Creative Looks' onboard, but they're labelled only by incomprehensible two-letter abbreviations. Ironically the firm is quite happy to tell you what these all stand for in the Imaging Edge Desktop software, just not on the camera itself.

With the camera using essentially the same sensor as the original A1, image quality is unsurprisingly very similar. Which is to say, more than good enough for almost any purpose. That 50MP sensor is capable of delivering a huge amount of detail when paired with Sony's G Master lenses. I mainly used the A1 II with the remarkable FE 28-70mm F2 GM that was announced alongside it, and the results were truly exceptional.

High-ISO noise is also kept well under control, with the camera delivering entirely usable images up to ISO 25,600 at least, even without resorting to AI noise reduction in raw processing. This is complemented by substantial dynamic range, especially at lower ISO settings. Using Adobe Camera Raw, it's possible to extract four or five stops of additional shadow detail without noise being a significant problem. This isn't quite the best image quality you'll get from a full-frame camera – that honour still goes to 60MP models such as the A7R V – but it's very close indeed.

Here, high-speed shooting let me capture the precise moment of touchdown
Sony A1 II, Sigma 100-400m at 400mm, 1/2000sec at f/6.3, ISO 1250

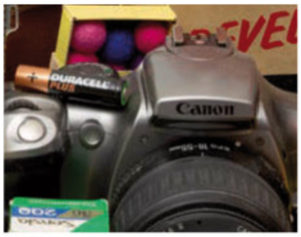
Nottingham Forest goalkeeper Matz Sels saves a shot from Kevin de Bruyne
Sony A1 II, FE 70-200mm F2.8 GM II at 80mm 1/500sec at f/2.8, ISO 800

ISO and noise

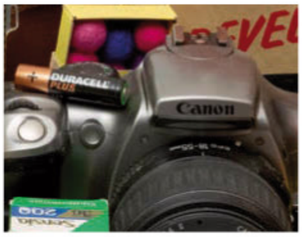
The crops below are taken from the same area in the picture above

At low sensitivities, the A1 II's 50MP sensor delivers exceptional levels of detail. This is maintained very well up to moderately high ISOs, with barely any visible loss of quality at ISO 1600. Go beyond ISO 3200 and shadow detail starts to get crushed and disappear, but even so, I'd be happy shooting at up to ISO 25,600 as a matter of course. The extended ISO 51,200 and 102,400 settings aren't great when examined closely onscreen, but they still deliver perfectly recognisable images when needed, especially with AI noise reduction applied in raw processing.

RAW ISO 100



RAW ISO 1600



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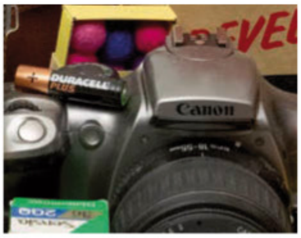

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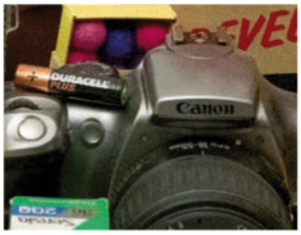
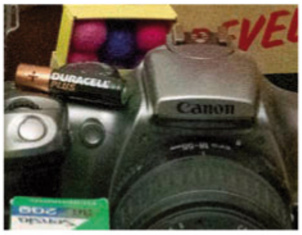
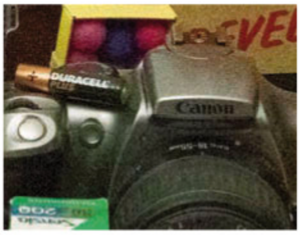


RAW ISO 51,200



RAW ISO 102,400



Verdict

Amateur Photographer
Testbench
GOLD
★★★★★

LET'S get one thing straight. There's no doubt that the Alpha A1 II is the best camera Sony has ever made. It includes all the best bits of the A9 III but is much more versatile, thanks to its 50MP sensor. While its sibling is highly sports-focused, the A1 is capable of handling pretty much anything. Regardless of whether you shoot sports, wildlife, portraits, events, weddings or landscapes, it's got you covered.

In almost every practical respect, the A1 II is also every bit as good as both the Nikon Z8 and Canon EOS R5 Mark II. Like those two cameras, it offers more capability than most photographers are normally likely to require. No matter what you're doing, chances are that it shoots faster, focuses better, and delivers higher resolution and dynamic range than you need. There's very little to choose between them.

There are, perhaps, a few question marks around detail aspects of the A1 II's usability. But they're mostly quite minor, and can generally be overcome if you're prepared to battle your way through the menus and fine-tune how the camera works. Sony's new auto subject-recognition option returned more false positives than I expected, but it's not a massive problem.

It is, however, impossible to ignore the A1 II's sky-high price relative to its rivals. It costs almost half as much again as the Canon EOS R5 Mark II, and practically double the Nikon Z8, without really doing anything extra. Of course, that price has to be weighed up against the cost of changing systems, and most users will likely be too heavily invested in lenses to consider it seriously. And the A1 II really can do pretty much anything – if you don't get the shot, there's no blaming the camera. For serious Sony users, it's the obvious choice.

FEATURES	9/10
BUILD & HANDLING	9/10
METERING	8/10
AUTOFOCUS	9/10
AWB & COLOUR	9/10
DYNAMIC RANGE	8/10
IMAGE QUALITY	9/10
VIEWFINDER/LCD	10/10

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SECOND-HAND CLASSIC

Canon EOS 6D Mark II

Don't overlook this fine full-frame DSLR that's dropped well below £1,000 on the second-hand market

The Canon EOS 6D Mark II arrived in 2017, five years after the original 6D. At the time it was one of Canon's more affordable full-frame cameras and presented an appealing set of features to enthusiasts who fancied the traditional styling and chunky handling of a DSLR but couldn't stretch to the EOS 5D Mark IV. Built around a 26.2MP CMOS sensor that's since been used in the mirrorless EOS RP, it offers an ISO range that can be expanded to ISO 50-102,400; 6.5fps burst shooting; Dual Pixel CMOS AF; and a 45-point all-cross-type AF system. In addition, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and GPS are built-in, while a 3in, 1.04m-dot vari-angle touchscreen graces the rear. Powered by a LP-E6N battery and with a single SD card slot, it's not as weather-sealed as pro-spec cameras, yet the build quality is such that it feels robust and well made.

What we said

- 'If size matters to you, be aware that it's still considerably bulkier than most of Canon's mirrorless models'
- 'Faithful colour and strong results at high sensitivity settings make it a very versatile option for a variety of subjects'
- 'AF points are tightly grouped'
- 'The feature set is advanced enough to satisfy most enthusiasts who feel ready to buy their first full-frame camera'

What to pay

The EOS 6D Mark II cost £1,999 new in 2017. Today you can pick one up in 'excellent' used condition with a shutter count of around 5,000 frames for £839. Examples with a higher shutter count of around 55k frames and in 'excellent' order can be snapped up for around £750. At the time of writing, the cheapest we found was in excellent condition with a 77k shutter count for £649.

How it fares today

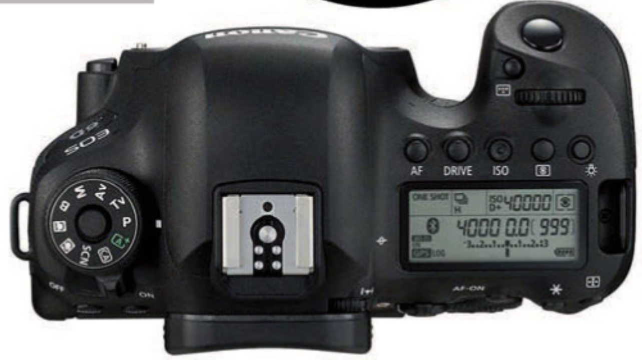
It's not surprising that the 6D Mark II remains very popular today when you consider what you get for your money. It's supported by a huge range of EF-lenses, boasts a longer battery life than mirrorless models and some still prefer an optical viewfinder over an EVF. The rather sedate 6.5fps burst speed, single card slot and lack of cutting-edge autofocus is where it shows its age.

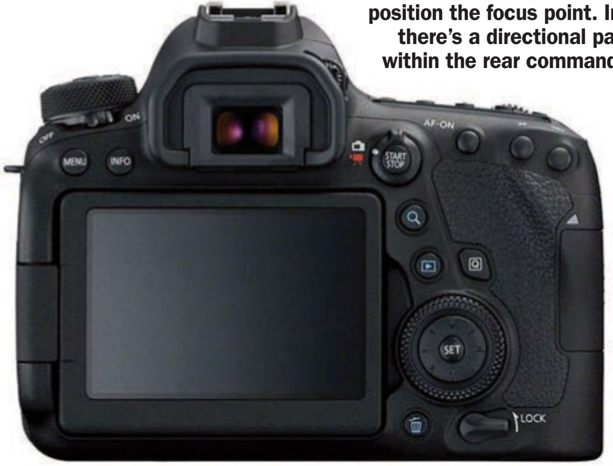
New alternatives

Canon's current closest equivalent full-frame mirrorless camera is the EOS R6 Mark II (£1,999). This is a powerful and highly impressive all-rounder that features a 24.2MP full-frame sensor, 40fps burst shooting with electronic shutter, in-body image stabilisation, 4K video at 60fps, twin SD card slots and a sophisticated AF system built on the subject detection seen in the EOS R3.

See over to find out what Canon EOS 6D Mark II owners have to say

Amateur Photographer
Testbench
Recommended
★★★★





You don't get a joystick to position the focus point. Instead, there's a directional pad inset within the rear command wheel

Existing Canon users will become familiar with the EOS 6D Mark II very quickly. It won't feel intimidating for those upgrading from a double-digit or entry-level triple-digit Canon APS-C DSLR

At a glance

£649-859 body only

- 26.2MP full-frame CMOS sensor
- ISO 50-102,400 (extended)
- 98% viewfinder coverage
- Full HD (60p) video recording
- 765g

For and against

- + Easy, quick and intuitive to operate
- + Reliable and constructed to a high standard
- + Image quality performance at high ISO
- + Fully articulating touchscreen
- − Lacks dual-card slots for backup/spill-over purposes
- − No 4K video or headphone port to monitor audio
- − AF points tightly grouped in the centre of the viewfinder
- − No exposure compensation button

What the owners think

Three EOS 6D Mark II users give their verdict

Tom Jones

From my days using disposable Kodaks to mid-level Canon DSLRs, the step up to the 6D Mark II was my first experience of full-frame sensors. It made an immediate impact with its performance and almost endless capabilities. I've found the low-light performance has been a huge advantage for animals and wildlife. Having previously used the APS-C Canon EOS 700D with a Sigma 150-600mm lens, it was noticeable that I was lacking the crop factor in terms of reach. Yet thanks to the low-light performance coupled with post-processing cropping, I still achieve fantastic results.

The beauty of the 6D Mark II is its versatility. It has travelled the world with me photographing wildlife, street, landscape, a bit of everything. The articulated screen is a godsend for photographing at angles that would otherwise be very awkward or seemingly impossible. I also couldn't fault its robustness, whether photographing in challenging -20°C temperatures in Iceland or in the hot and humid jungles of Mexico. Overall, it has offered me reliable performance and is still a camera I thoroughly enjoy picking up and using when I need to.

The low-light performance is great for wildlife photography
Canon EOS 6D Mark II, 150-600mm at 600mm
1/800sec at f/6.3, ISO 8000

Tom can be found on Instagram @tom.jones.photography

For and against

- + Low-light performance
- + Versatile for a wide range of subjects
- – Can't back-up to a second card
- – Lacking a dedicated AF joystick

Kristian Dragnev

I feel this camera as the physical end of my creative perception. It completes my instinct for creation. I love the intuitive user interface and the ability to adapt it for every situation. The full-frame sensor is quite excellent and the fully articulated touchscreen has been a lifesaver many times. Back-button focusing is a key element for every pro and this camera provides this functionality. Timelapse shooting is another ace in the pack.

Any outdoor photographer has to be aware of the weather, but this camera has survived many a rain shower in my possession. I've shot many sporting events on the sidelines of stadiums and basketball courts, and the ability to pick shots and share them with other devices is phenomenal and so fast. The connectivity works well and easily links with the Canon phone app. You can browse your photos, star-rate, copy them to your phone, and from the phone edit and send elsewhere. It might be a semi-pro DSLR, but it's more than capable of world-class photography.

The full-frame sensor delivers fine image quality
Canon EOS 6D Mark II, EF 50mm f/1.4 USM,
1/500sec at f/2, ISO 2000

Kristian can be found on Instagram @sapbate

For and against

- + Excellent connectivity options
- – Limited number of focus points

Freezing temperatures are no problem for the robust body
Canon EOS 6D Mark II, 24-70mm f/2.8 at 39mm, 1/640sec at f/8, ISO 100

Natalie Joray

The EOS 6D Mark II was my first full-frame camera after having used a Canon EOS 1300D. I originally bought it for event photography while volunteering for a student association, and later used it for work events as well. With just one SD card slot at the side, the 6D Mark II doesn't have the redundancy necessary for a professional, but it covered my use case in between hobby and professional work quite well.

More recently, I've started photographing concerts – a more dynamic subject matter in often very low light or other complicated lighting situations. I'm particularly impressed with how well it performs under these types of conditions at higher ISO, and how focus hunting is very rarely an issue in extremely dark situations and venues. While this has definitely pushed the camera to its limits, I'd still recommend it to concert photography beginners on a budget. The money saved on buying a used EOS 6D Mark II in good second-hand condition over a more expensive used full-frame camera could be put towards buying a few excellent prime lenses instead.

Natalie can be found on Instagram @natalie.joray

Natalie finds the camera works well for concerts
Canon EOS 6D Mark II, EF 85mm f/1.8 USM, 1/800sec at f/1.8, ISO 500

For and against

+ Low light autofocus performance
− Limited video capabilities

PNY RP60 Portable SSD

Andy Westlake tests a drive that promises rapid transfer speeds at an affordable price

● £91 (1TB), £233 (2TB) ● pny.com

The PNY RP60 is a rugged portable solid-state drive (SSD) designed for photographers and videographers on the go. It employs a USB-C connector for use with computers, smartphones, tablets and other devices, promising read speeds up to 2,000 MB/s and write speeds of 1,800 MB/s. With a silicone-coated outer shell, it's designed to be water, dust and drop-resistant.

Most SSDs use the same USB-C connector, but that doesn't mean they're all created equal. Instead, they employ obtusely named interface variants with different data transfer speeds. Usually, faster speeds mean higher prices. But with the RP60, PNY is promising the speed of USB 3.2 Gen 2x2, but at a price close to other brands' USB 3.2 Gen 2x1 drives, which are only half as fast.

As to whether you'll actually get the promised speeds, that depends on various factors, including what size files you're working with, and the capabilities of your host device. To assess the RP60's performance in practice, I compared it side-by-side to a Lexar Armor 700 SSD with the same interface, and to a SanDisk Extreme USB 3.2 Gen 2x1 drive. Both are more expensive, at £148 and £100 for 1TB, respectively.

Using the CrystalDiskMark benchmarking software, all three drives gave essentially the same numbers, with peak read and write speeds of about 940MB/sec. This mainly reflects the fact that my 2019 Dell XPS 15 Windows 11 PC doesn't support USB 3.2 Gen 2x2 very well, although it's fully capable of exploiting the newer and faster USB 4.0. I also measured how long it took to copy a 40GB folder of raw and JPEG files to each drive from my laptop's SSD. Again, the PNY drive matched the much pricier Lexar at about 88 seconds. Meanwhile, the SanDisk took 40 seconds longer.

In fact, about my only real criticism of the PNY drive is that its plastic casing flexes a little when you squeeze it. This doesn't inspire quite as much confidence in its robustness. It's also fractionally larger than most other portable SSDs.

Verdict

PNY has a habit of delivering high-performance storage devices at a lower price than its rivals, and once again, the RP60 delivers. It matches much more expensive drives in terms of speed, and while it may perhaps not withstand as much abuse, it should be absolutely fine in normal use.

ALL PRICES ARE APPROXIMATE STREET PRICES

IP65 rating
The drive is dust- and water-resistant. Unusually, the USB-C port even has a plug-in cover.

Loop
A clip loop on one corner allows the drive to be securely attached to a camera bag for easy access.

Speed
To get the fastest transfer speeds, your computer needs to support USB 3.2 Gen 2x2.

Cable
A generously long 30cm USB-C to USB-C cable is supplied. But there's no USB-A cable or adapter.

Amateur Photographer Testbench Recommended ★★★★½

At a glance

- USB-C connection
- 2,000 MB/s max read speed; 1,800 MB/s write
- Water, dust and drop-resistant
- 100x60.3x12.4mm, 54.8g
- For Windows, Mac, Android and iOS

RUGGEDNESS RATINGS

PNY specifies the drive should survive drops of up to 3m and work at operating temperatures of 0-70°C. Its IP65 rating means it's dust-tight and protected against low-pressure jets of water from any angle. However, it shouldn't be treated as fully waterproof (i.e. able to survive full immersion).

Tony Kemplen on the ...

Zeiss Ikon Contax IIa

A classic 35mm camera made by Zeiss in the early to mid 1950s

In Europe, quality 35mm camera manufacture in the middle of the last century was dominated by two German giants, Leitz and Zeiss Ikon. Leitz made the Leica, while Zeiss made the Contax. Both were high-end rangefinders with interchangeable lenses. Appearances aside, the main difference was that Leicas had horizontally running cloth focal plane shutters, while Contax used vertical running metal ones. From the outset the Zeiss shutters were known to be problematic, and even in their early years gained a reputation for being unreliable and expensive to service.

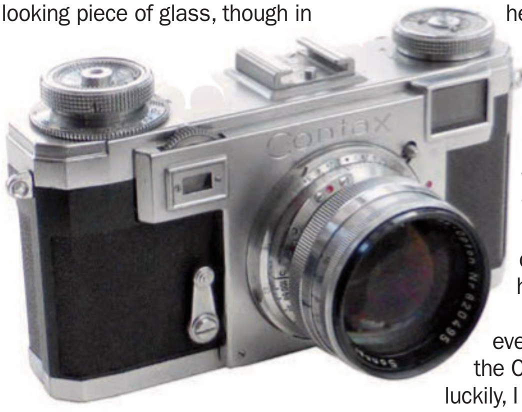
The Contax I appeared in 1932 and was followed by the Contax II in 1936. Production was halted by the war, but in the West was restarted in 1950, with an improved and more reliable version known as the Contax IIa. As the system was aimed at the professional market, a good range of lenses was available including several 50mm standard lenses. Mine has the f/1.5 Sonnar, which is an impressive-looking piece of glass, though in a non-reflex camera the advantages of the very wide aperture are tempered by the difficulty in getting exact focus with a rangefinder.

A charming portrait of Tony's granddaughter, shot on the Contax

Both the Leica and the Contax were popular cameras for what we now call street photography. They are small and quiet, and can be used discreetly. I'm getting rather deaf, and when I developed the film, I found that on three occasions I'd shot the same frame twice. What must have happened is that I composed the shot, but when I pressed the shutter release, heard nothing and assumed I'd not yet wound on, so repeated the process. In fact the shutter had fired, but is so smooth and quiet that I hadn't noticed!

I don't have an ever-ready case for the Contax, but luckily, I do have one for the Russian Kiev II. If you're not familiar with the history of Zeiss Ikon, this might seem a bit odd, so here's the story. Following World War 2, Germany was divided into East and West, with East Germany falling under the Soviet sphere of influence. As part of war reparations, the Zeiss assembly line in the East German city of Dresden was removed lock stock and barrel, or more accurately lens, body and shutter, to Kiev in the Soviet Union. Here production continued using the equipment for making the pre-war Contax II, renamed the Kiev II. Meanwhile the Zeiss plant in Stuttgart in West Germany resumed production and developed new models.

My version of Contax IIa was last made in 1954, meaning it must be at least 70 years old. So given its rather poor reputation, I was pleasantly surprised to find that the shutter is fully functional, with none of the drag which is often found with ageing focal-plane shutters. Photographing children is always a bit hit and miss, especially at close range and with a wide aperture. But I think I just about got away with using f/4 for this indoor photo of my youngest granddaughter.



This camera is fitted with a 50mm f/1.5 Sonnar lens

See more of Tony's photos on **Instagram @tonykemplen** or at **flickr.com/tony_kemplen**

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The art of colour

Multi-award-winning photographer **Eric Meola** looks back on 100 stunning colour images from his commercial and personal work in his latest book, *Bending Light: The Moods of Color*. We find out more about his love affair with colour and light and some of the stories behind his iconic photos

Light and colour

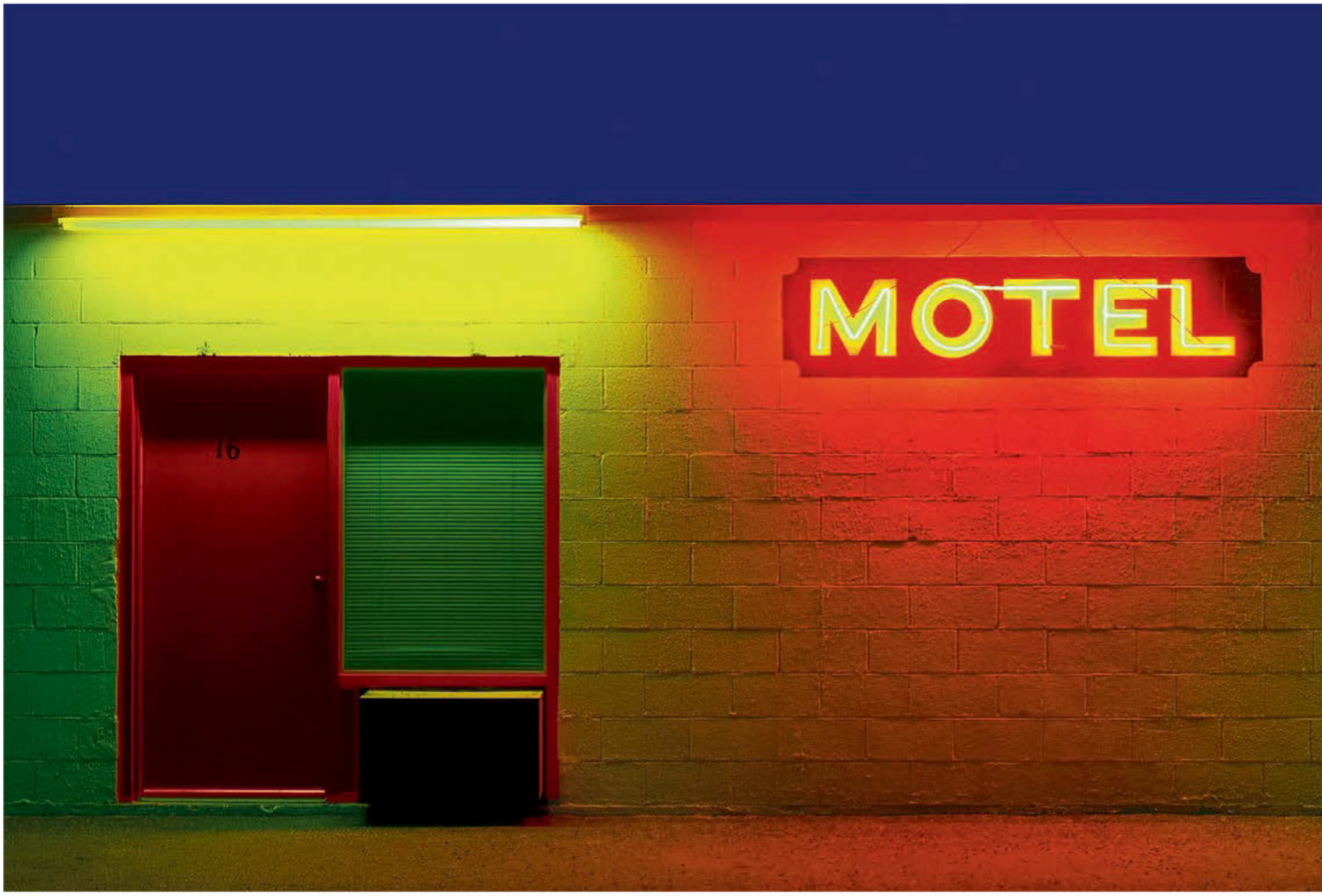
What influences us? Which books and images and movies become part of our visual psyche? I worked with photographer Pete Turner in his Carnegie Hall Tower studio for 18 months, starting in late 1968. Photographer Art Kane had a studio on the opposite side of the building, and he had just photographed Bob Dylan, Jefferson Airplane, The Who, and Jim Morrison for a photo-essay called 'The New Rock' that appeared in *Life* magazine. Richard Avedon's solarised portraits of The Beatles, Hiro's dazzling still lives and fashion photographs, Jimi Hendrix's wardrobe, Tom Wolfe's book *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, Roy Lichtenstein's pop art comics – they influenced all of us and became part of the vernacular of an era.

At various times in the early 1970s, I met Hiro, Jerry Uelsmann, Irving Penn, Gordon Parks, Jay Maisel, Salvador Dalí, and Richard Avedon. I went to the Met and to MoMA, to the Cloisters, the Guggenheim, the Whitney, the Morgan Library and Museum, the George Eastman Museum, the Frick Collection, Pace/MacGill Gallery, and Howard Greenberg Gallery. Certain visual experiences stayed with me: from the light in Edward Hopper's paintings to the light in Mark Rothko's colour fields, from Terrence Malick's vistas in *Days of Heaven* to the mirages in David Lean's *Lawrence of Arabia*, from the colour in Georgia O'Keeffe's flowers to the colour in Saul Leiter's blurs of New York City streets.

Light is about grandeur, memory, and emotion; colour is about mood, soul, and life. I have never dwelled on the question 'What is colour?' There is a cadence to colour, as well as a mystery. When I stare at Mark Rothko's colour field paintings, I am transformed as well as transfixed. I photograph in colour because I see it and feel it, and because it's fun. Playing with colour is my way to escape the chaos of the world, and to express it. I have no favourite colour, but if I did, it would be gray – the perfect neutral that acts in contrast to the colours around it and lets them stand on their own.

Colours are, of course, symbolic, and in various cultures they have individual meanings. In the West, royalty is symbolised by a rich, deep purple. In India, blue is associated with Lord Krishna, and red with wealth and the goddess Durga. I will forever associate red with Pete Turner's photograph 'Giraffe', and gray with the deep storm light on Route 66 in Ernst Haas's photograph of Central Avenue in Albuquerque. Emotionally, and cross-culturally, the most favoured colour is a deep, saturated blue. Yet that is where preferences end, and the moods associated with colours diverge and become subjective.

In my photographs, I have used such colours to convey emotion, distance, and time. Colour becomes light, just as shadows are the absence of it, and colour is my subject, as much as the apparent subject itself.



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BENDING
LIGHT
The Moods of Color
ERIC MEOLA

This feature is made up of extracts from Eric Meola's latest book, *Bending Light: The Moods of Color.* It's a celebration of his stunning colour photography taken throughout his career of editorial, advertising and personal work. The book is available to buy from The Images Publishing Group, RRP £65. **www.imagespublishing.com/uk**

Motel Mojave Desert, California 1978

It was humming. Loudly.

Sitting in the dark, on the edge of the Mojave Desert, a ten-ton block of concrete seemed to be waiting for aliens to land. As my assistant and I watched, the humming became louder, as if it was the soundtrack from a bad horror film. We stepped back, not because the glowing edifice might explode, but to take it in, to scan every bit of the raw cement structure that confronted us. Its transformer had seen better days, and the yellow-green, fluorescent phosphors kept sputtering. Large insects with bat-like wings were darting back and forth, and their buzzing was a counterpoint to the incessant humming. I almost expected someone to pull up the blinds and look out at us.

We had seen it from a mile away, a monastic remnant of post-industrial, post-apocalyptic America. I don't remember where we were. Maybe it was Baker, maybe it was north on 127, past Silver Dry Lake on the way to Shoshone. We stared, transfixed, at the cinderblock, washed in acid-green and yellow light, and its pulsing red neon nightlight that declared in shorthand: MOTEL. I photographed the sign and wondered if there was a curse that came with making photographs of it. We walked back a hundred yards and just stared and laughed some more. What else could you do but laugh, except perhaps ring the buzzer and pay ten bucks for the rite of passage and . . . stay there?

We drove on in the desert's warm breeze, leaving MOTEL behind as it kept humming loudly, playing its discordant lullaby to the bugs.

Siesta, Oaxaca, Mexico 1975

In 1975, four years after Starbucks opened its first store in Seattle, I got a call from an art director in Sweden named Bo Zaunders. Bo had designed a campaign for a coffee company named Gevalia, and he wanted to know if I would travel to Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, and Tanzania for several months to photograph coffee plantations. There's nothing like being blessed with colour while on assignment for a new friend, and I soon learned that Bo was a gifted photographer, writer, and cartoonist, as well as an art director.

It was to be a year of good fortune for me – meeting Bo, travelling to far-off places to shoot landscapes and portraits, and tasting some of the world's best caffeine. I was in my mid-20s, and I had never had a cup of coffee in my life! What I didn't count on were the gray, overcast, foggy days, and the long meetings among old friends who drank bourbon, smoked cigars, sipped coffee, and told tales about the good old days as they sat for hours around long, mahogany tables.

Looking back at the photographs I made in a small town in Mexico, I came across this photograph of a man taking a siesta in late afternoon light. One afternoon, as I listened to a group of men talking, I noticed one of them had fallen asleep, oblivious to the banter of his friends, and unaware of my camera. The photograph was there for anyone to make, and after I took it, I photographed the other men who were deep in conversation. I was on a journey of seeing, and I could set the rules, and for me there were no rules other than to shoot what I felt as much as what I saw.

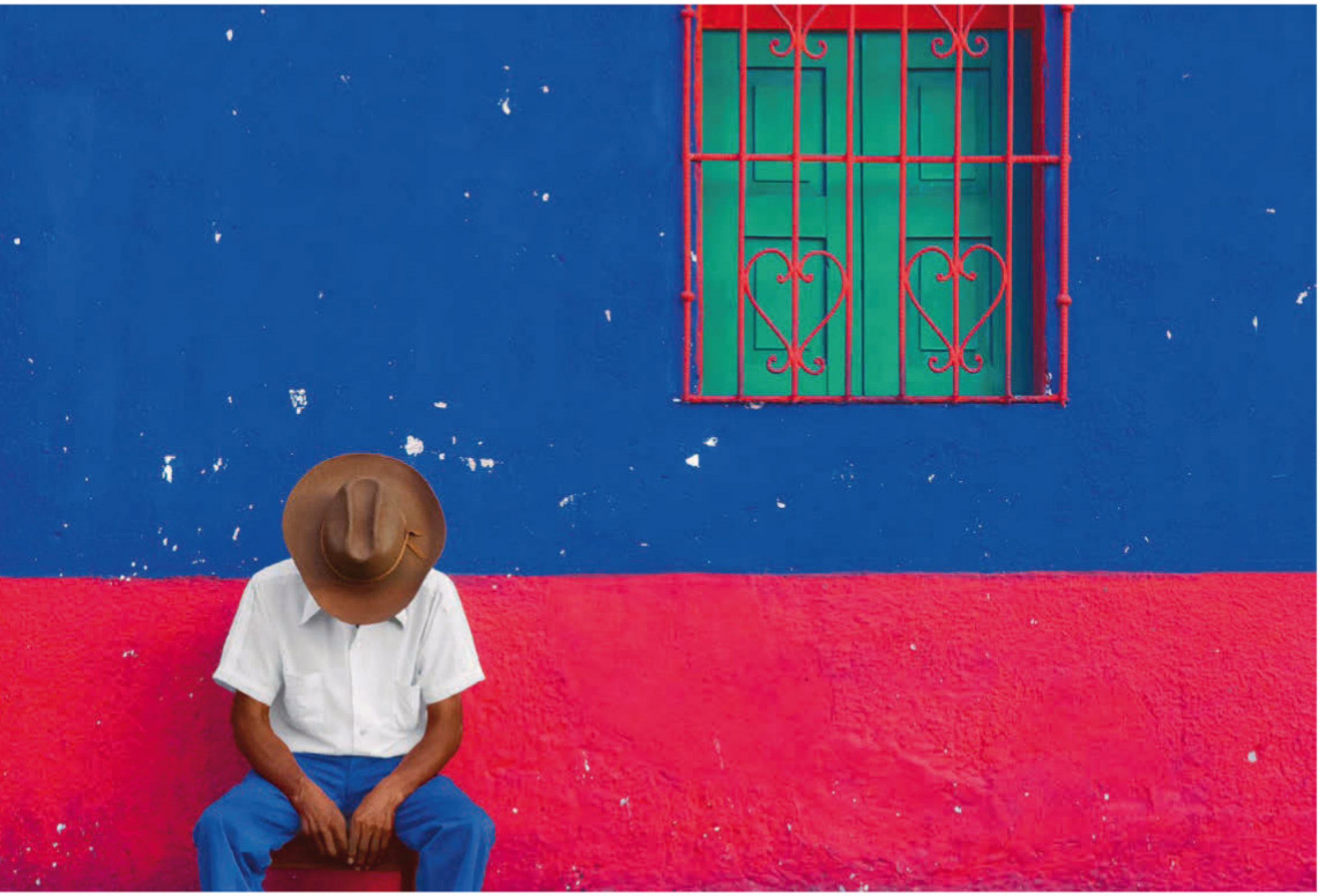
Tulips and Hyacinth, Lisse, Netherlands 1988

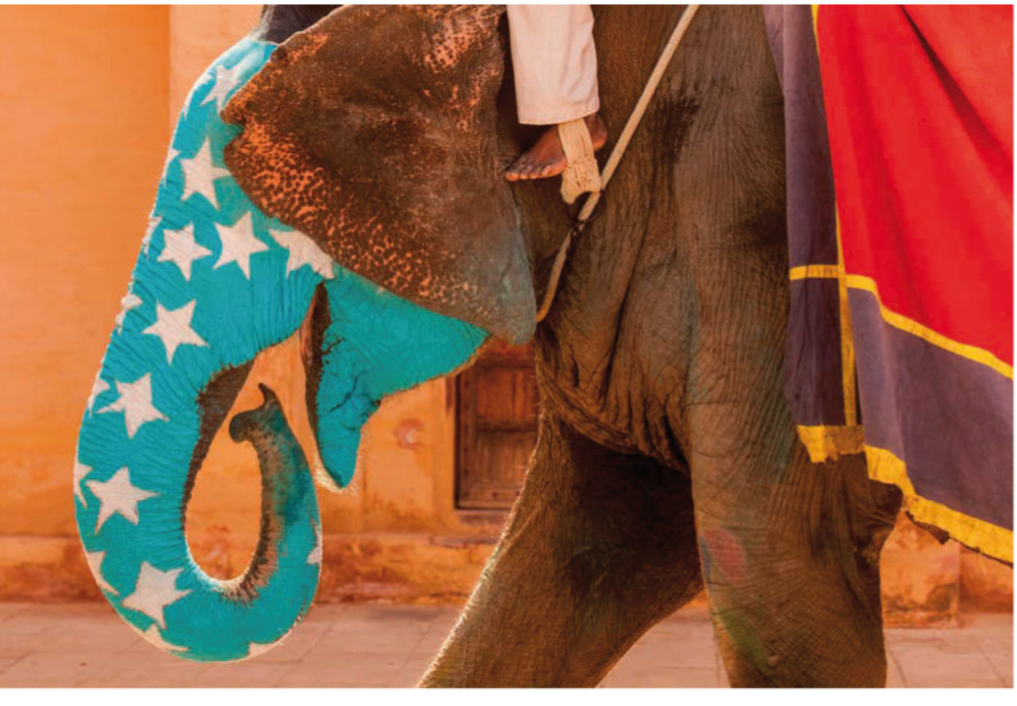
It was our first evening in Amsterdam, and as we walked along a canal at dusk, a motorcycle roared up behind us and the rider grabbed Joanna's purse, containing her license, passport, credit cards, and money. Within seconds, the thief disappeared over two canals and bridges. We spent that evening at a police station and the next morning at the American Embassy. And then we hired a limo and spent several glorious days photographing flowers in the land of tulips.

Flowers are among the easiest and the most difficult subjects to photograph. Irving Penn photographed dying flowers, and Ernst Haas used shallow focus, inserting his lens deep into the petals. I chose to mix contrasting and complementary colours.

Despite my fascination with colour, two colours that I had never photographed together in nature were red and purple – that is, until I went to Holland. What drew me to this intersection of colours was the geometry of the red tulips cutting through the field of grape hyacinth. I closed my lens aperture to f/22 for more depth of focus. It's interesting to me that the increased depth, along with the interplay of colours, resulted in a photograph that is both two- and three-dimensional. The third colour – the small splashes of blue-green grasses – intensifies the red and purple, as well as the realism of an otherwise abstract photograph.

Every time we came back into the United States after that visit to Holland, we were pulled aside because of the bureaucracy regarding Joanna's stolen passport, and it always took us back to our walk along the canal. And the tulips.





Turquoise Elephant with Stars, Jaipur, India 2011

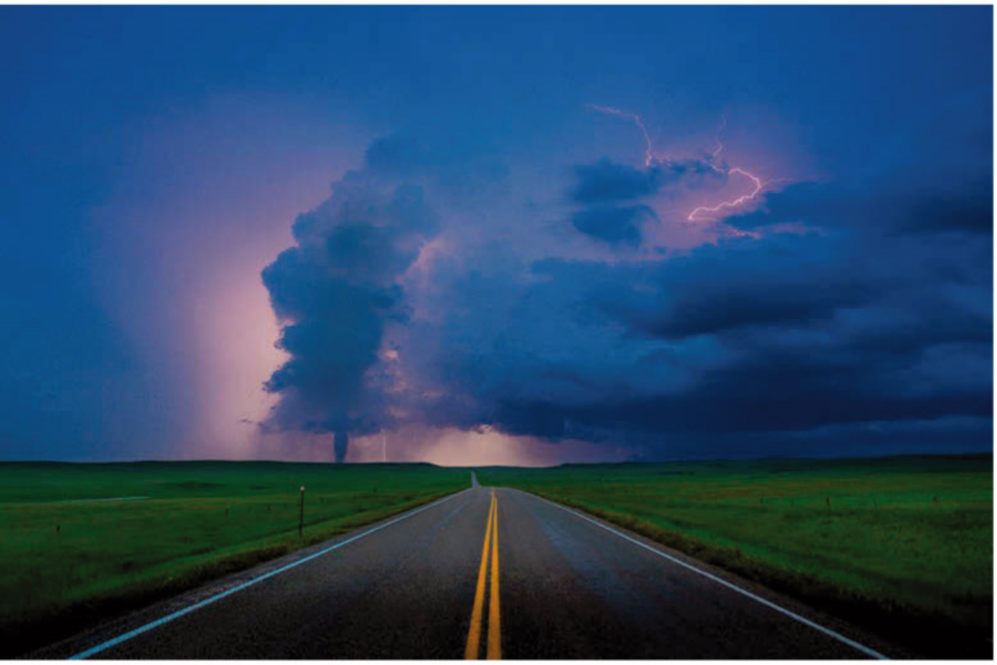
Elephants are sacred in India and revered as living incarnations of Lord Ganesha (Ganesh), the Hindu elephant god who symbolises wisdom and intellect, and is thought to bring power, peace, wisdom, strength, fortune, and good luck. Throughout India, you will find shrines to Ganesha, and many people see the union of Ganesha's body and elephant head as a representation of how the spirit should live in harmony with nature. Elephants were often kept as pets in ancient times, and Hindus often invoke Ganesha's name at the beginning of a journey.

Unfortunately, in modern-day India, elephants are often mistreated and used to transport tourists for profit. According to the BBC, India holds more than 4,000 elephants in captivity. I photographed this one, which was painted turquoise, outside the Amber Fort, near Jaipur.

Nocturnal Tornado, Buffalo, South Dakota 2018

I would be lying if I said I never dreamt of photographing a tornado at night. But, I will admit, it has crossed my mind for a fleeting moment or two. Late in the afternoon of 28 June 2018, a swarm of tornadoes swept across the border of Montana into the northwest corner of South Dakota. In just a few hours, several chasers, including myself, photographed more tornadoes than were seen that entire spring in the Great Plains.

The conditions were difficult, to say the least – there were so many tornadoes and precipitation that it took an incredible effort by meteorologist extraordinaire Bill Reid to track them. Bill kept us safe while we were shooting in very close proximity to the storms, in high winds and sometimes poor visibility. After the most exhausting and adrenaline-pumping storm chase I've ever been a part of, we stopped to shoot lightning at night, thinking we had seen our last tornado of the day – and that was true, as far as daylight was concerned.



Along State Highway 20, west of Buffalo, South Dakota, a tornado was lurking in the dark, but it was only visible in the staccato flashes of lightning. I scrambled to set up my tripod. Was I hallucinating? Did I really see a tornado out there ahead of us, in the dark, was there really another one? Would this day never stop? Or, more accurately, would this night never stop?

Later, in the van on the way to our motel, I saw this 'razor sharp' frame of a tornado, silhouetted by lightning, at the base of a magnificent cumulonimbus cloud. There was a bolt of lightning next to it and a road leading to the horizon. The entire landscape was lit up by lightning. Many months later, I asked Bill about the best chase day he had ever seen, and he didn't hesitate to say that in 30 years, he would put that day at the top of his list. I am humbled just to have been there, let alone to have made this image.

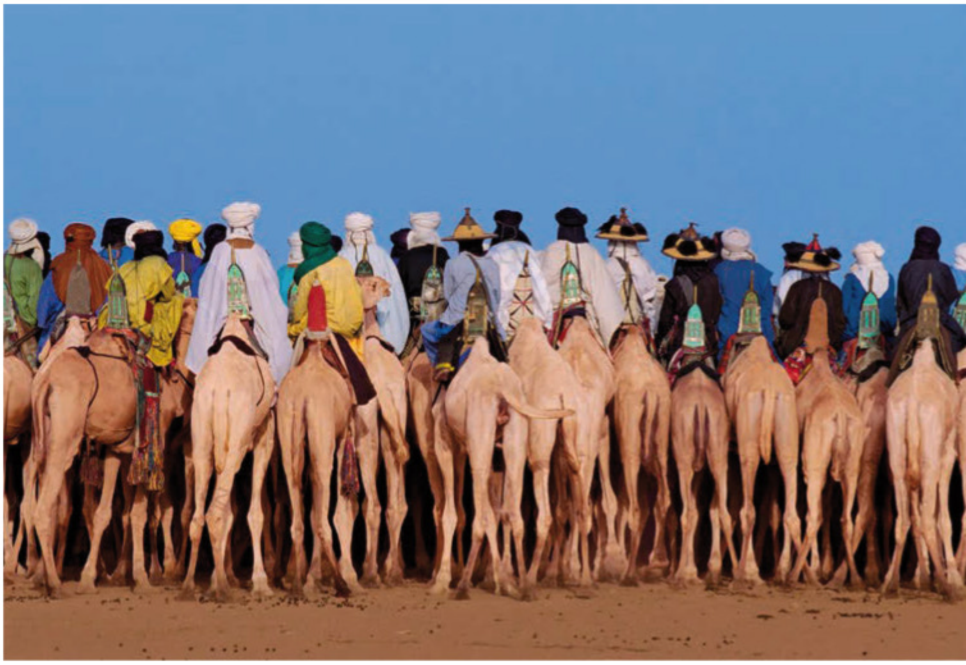
Rendezvous in the Desert Agadez, Niger 1996

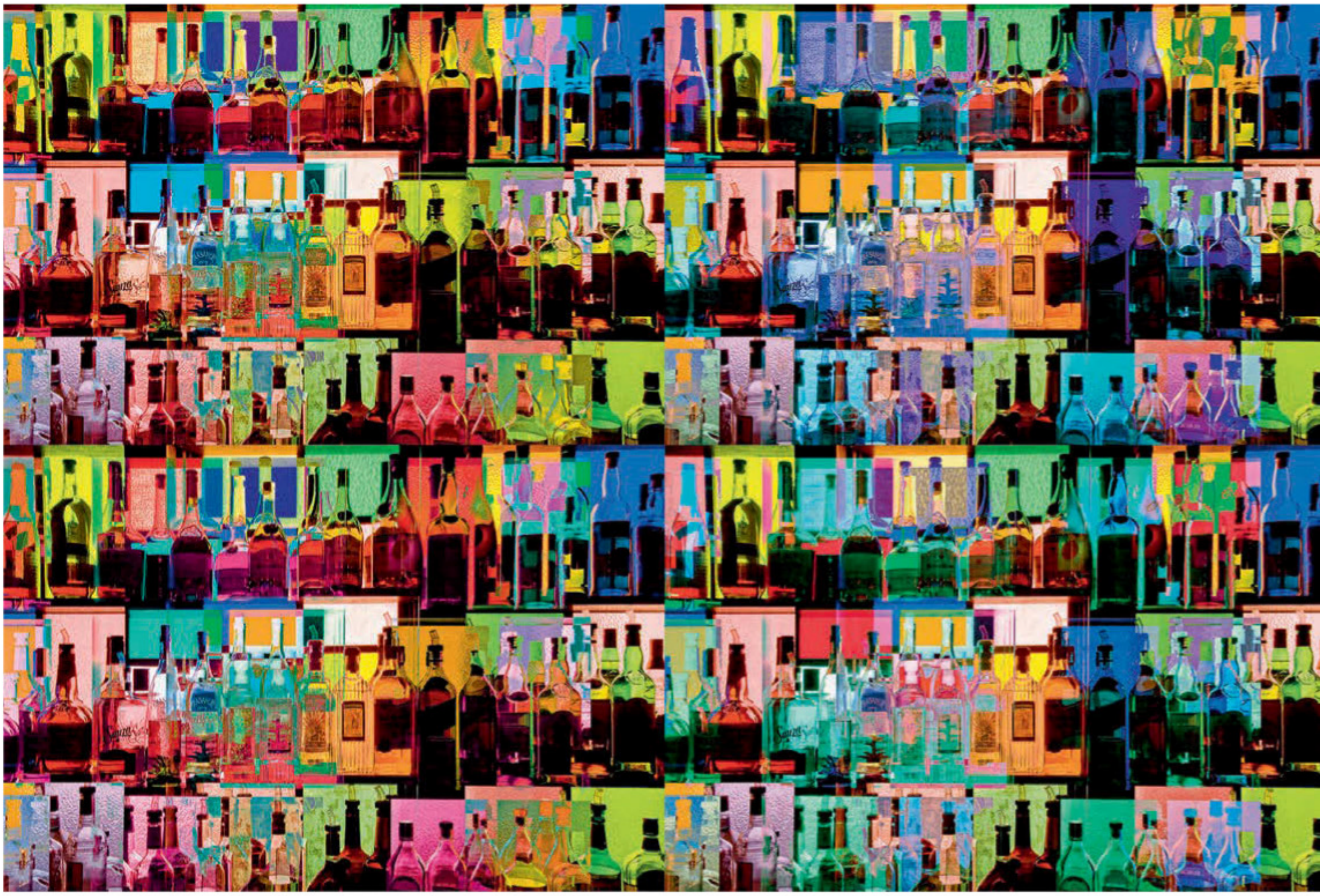
In late 1996, I travelled to Niger in West Africa to photograph the Tuareg and Wodaabe, which are nomadic tribes of the Sahel. After a long, tortuous drive through desert scrub, we emerged into a treeless area. Later that day, we hung a thermometer out and it reached 108 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade.

The tribes had made a rendezvous in the sub-Sahara to participate in the Gerewol festival, a gathering for dancing, singing, and courtship rituals. In this image, the tribes were circled around the ceremonies to observe them, and I had crawled outside the circle to look back from a distance. In the emptiness of the desert, the spectacle of the mounted tribes and their chanting were breathtaking.

Yet Niger was in a civil war at the time, and the sounds of gunfire could be heard in the distance. After a few days, we ran out of water, and our driver, Haruna, took one of our vehicles and drove several miles to an ancient desert well. Hours went by until a young boy who had been with him staggered back into camp to announce that the driver had been shot to death and the vehicle had been taken.

Later, another driver retrieved the body and drove back to Agadez to file a report. It would be another day before a small contingent from the Niger Army came to escort us out of the desert. Whenever I look at this image, it reminds me of the two worlds that have always existed in Africa, and the constant dichotomy between war and peace that exists everywhere.





Psychedelic Bar, East Hampton, New York 2010

A photographer walks into a bar, and makes a New Year's toast.

I made this photograph before dinner at a restaurant near my home. The bar had a series of coloured plexiglass panels that were illuminated from behind, outlining rows of spirits, and I sat at the bar for half an hour making multiple exposures of each row. I wish I could say I remember more precisely how I made this image, but I can't. I was looking for something complex – a repetition of shapes and a pattern of colours. At times, I will experiment for hours on end, and sometimes the experiments go nowhere, late into the night, in endless bursts of energy as I work intuitively toward the end I am seeking.

This image was made during the winter holidays, and the subject offered an array of vibrant colours, but I wanted a more abstract sense of movement, so I added one layer on top of another until I got the stair-stepping effect I was looking for. In my mind, this is how it looked to me, and yet I didn't have a single drink.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Doing just fine

24MP is enough

I was a professional film photographer from 1976-2007. I used an early digital camera for some low-res stuff near the end of that period. Last year I became obsessed with getting a new camera. Finally I decided that I would first give some of my existing collection of old digital cameras a chance, on different local trips. My old DSLRs are mostly pre-2008, and still quite nice for just posting online. After doing this review I discovered that two of them have 20 megapixels, which I never appreciated before, and one of them performed well above my expectations.

My Nikon D3200 has 24.1MP which is enough for any serious things, though in retirement that isn't often. It made me realise that I'm doing just fine. Thanks to John Bridges for helping push back on my wanting to buy a new camera for no darn reason, especially as an old retired guy.

David Holmes

LETTER OF THE WEEK WINS A SAMSUNG 256GB PRO PLUS MICRO SDXC CARD. NOTE: PRIZE APPLIES TO UK AND EU RESIDENTS ONLY

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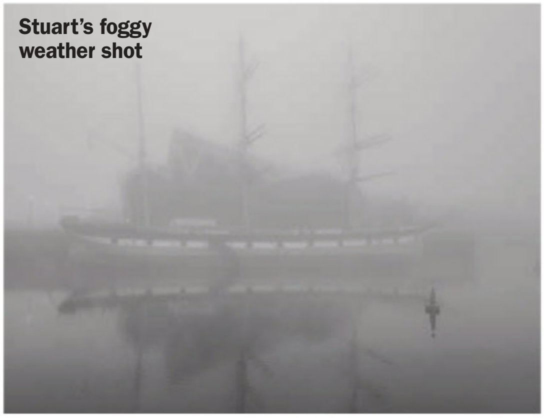

Stuart's foggy weather shot

© STUART NEVILLE

Fog on the Clyde

We recently had a spell of really foggy weather in Glasgow, and I thought great – lots of picture possibilities! I soon discovered that autofocus doesn't like fog, so switched to manual and got some decent pictures, including (see above) of the Riverside Museum and Tall Ship Glenlee on the Clyde. Over the years, AP has advised us how to 'master manual focusing'. I've finally been able to put your advice into practice, so thank you.

Stuart Neville

Recycle

Can I suggest that rather than photographers being obsessed with new cameras they look to own better pre-owned gear. This year alone I bought a Hasselblad H5D-40 body for £1,400, a Canon EOS 5D Mark II for my son with Canon 28-135 for £350 and a Godox V860II at £65, all with a five-year guarantee from CEX.

I also bought a Gitzo GT2541EX for £129 from LCE, a Hasselblad H3DII body for £699 from LCE and a 50mm Hasselblad lens from MPB for £300 – all in immaculate condition. So please can we see more recycling rather than new, new, new.

Jeremy Rundle

You got some great deals there, Jeremy. Nobody dedicates more editorial space to second-hand than AP. It features almost every week and we dedicate entire issues to the subject. But we're not going to stop writing about the latest new releases too.

Enjoyable task

The end of the year always brings an enjoyable task. I go through a year's worth of AP magazines and pull out articles of interest.

These are usually features on wildlife and nature photography, equipment reviews or articles on a special technique. Once I get going I can reduce a pile of APs to a handful of loose pages in an evening for reference and perusal when and as required. Keep those mags coming!

Nigel Bewley

Under the radar

Your Bumper Christmas Special was hugely enjoyable. By far the best piece of kit I've used this year is the Fujinon GF55 f/1.7. It's an astonishingly good lens, but seems to have slipped under the radar. It is far better than any of those included in your 'best lenses of the year' round-up. I realise you can't review everything but when a lens is this good, it really should be being reviewed by AP. But thank you for all your sterling work in 2024 and all the best for 2025.

Rob McIntosh

THIS WEEK WE ASKED...

What are your photography goals for 2025?

You said...

Jay Murfitt
Get back on race tracks and enjoy life again.

Richard Krawiec @KrawiecRichard
Try harder to drop the addiction of over-post processing…

Tina Prior
Take more photos. Upgrade my camera. Practice. Practice. Practice. Enjoy.

Jack Simpson @jack9simpson
To do the same as I've done for 39 years: take too many snaps, and try to realise when I've spent too much time blathering on to retail folks.

Caroline Bennett
Start a personal photography project about my community. I've been thinking about this for a few years and now I feel I have the confidence to do it.

Dibs Photography
To just allow my workshop company to grow as it has been. So many good times with good people.

Andy McDonald
Continuing my fine art b&w architecture work mainly, but I am hoping to give some camera club talks as well.

Ben Randall @benrand72
Get back into medium format.

James Booth Photography
To shoot a Premiership Women's Rugby game.

Kevin Winter
I intend to enter more photography competitions; entered a couple last year but didn't have any success.

Richard Napthen
Keep trying to improve. Would also be nice one day to get just 1 point in APOY!

Richard Hancy
Get the dust off of my 7D and start using it again and not rely on my phone.

Kathryn Willett
Do a photo course and learn my camera properly.

MuttonGrumble
I would love to go to the Dolomites if funds allow that.

Kaz @Turbogirlie
Build a darkroom and learn the wet process for 35mm film.

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See page 3 for how to contact us

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Our favourite photos posted by readers on our social media channels this week

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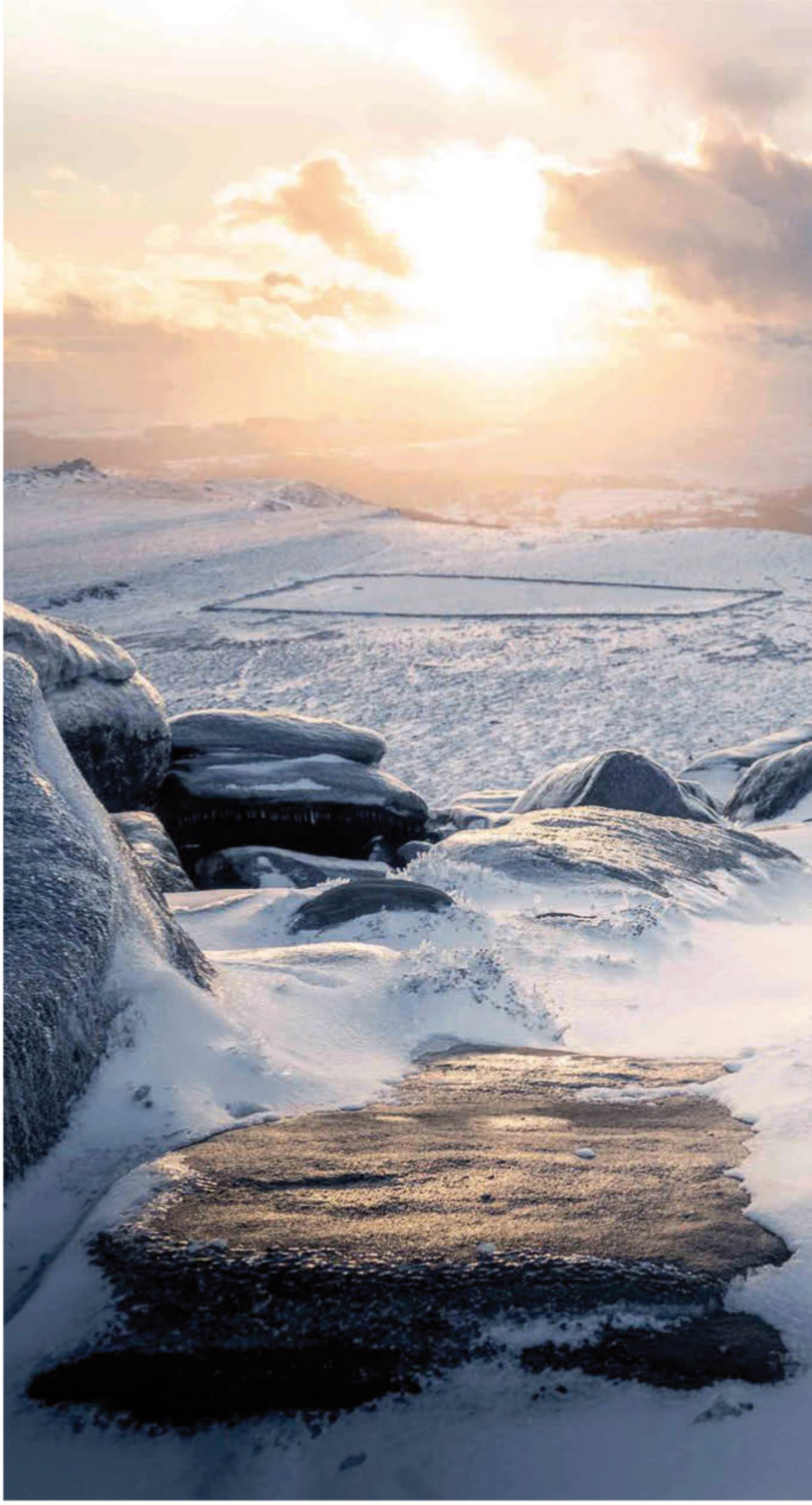
#appicoftheweek

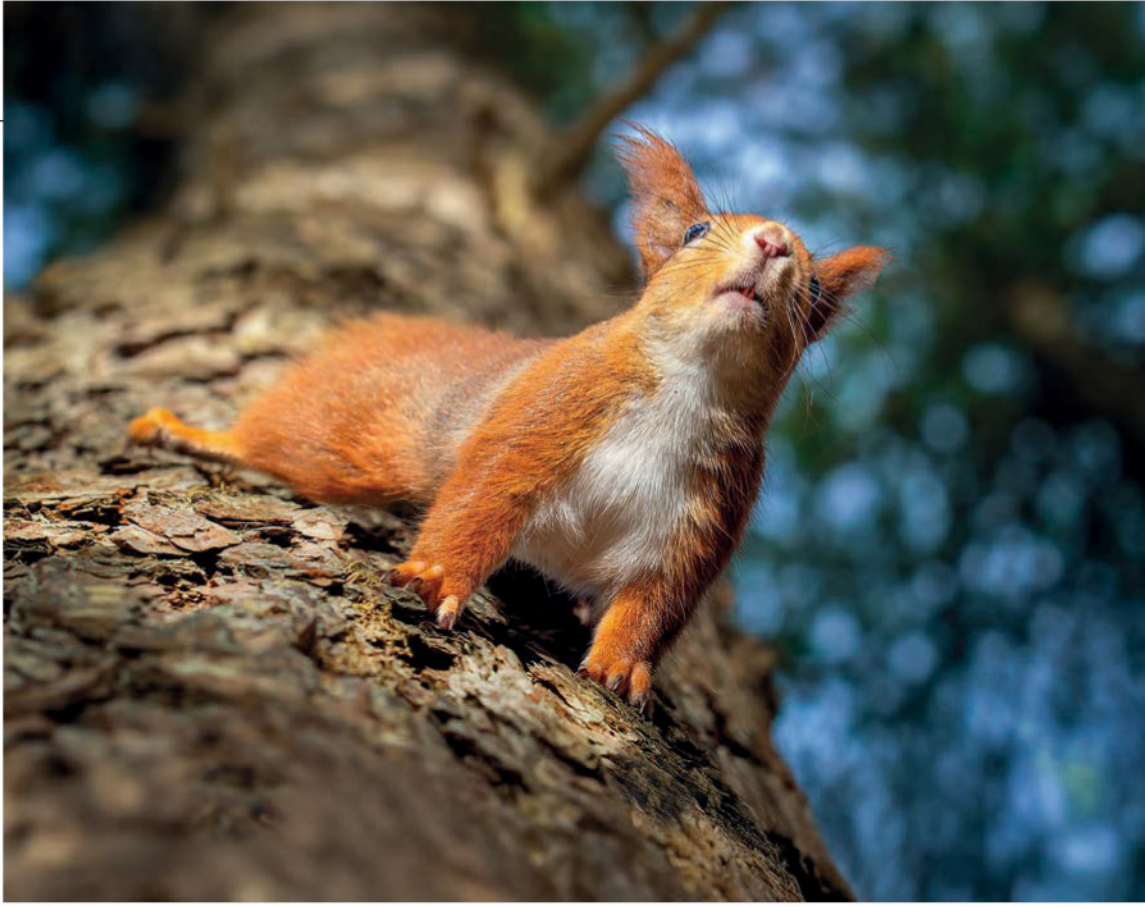
Cold Snap by Alec Waters

Nikon Z7II, Nikon Z 24-70mm f/4 lens, 1/10sec at f/11, ISO 64, 24mm

'When I set off that day I wanted to get down to Carl Wark to photograph back up at Higger Tor. I didn't realise how much snow there was and just how slippery it would be. As I went towards the edge of Higger Tor the sun started to break through the cloud, lighting up the rocks which were encased in ice.'

Instagram: @outdoor_amputee





What Goes Up by Ian Groves

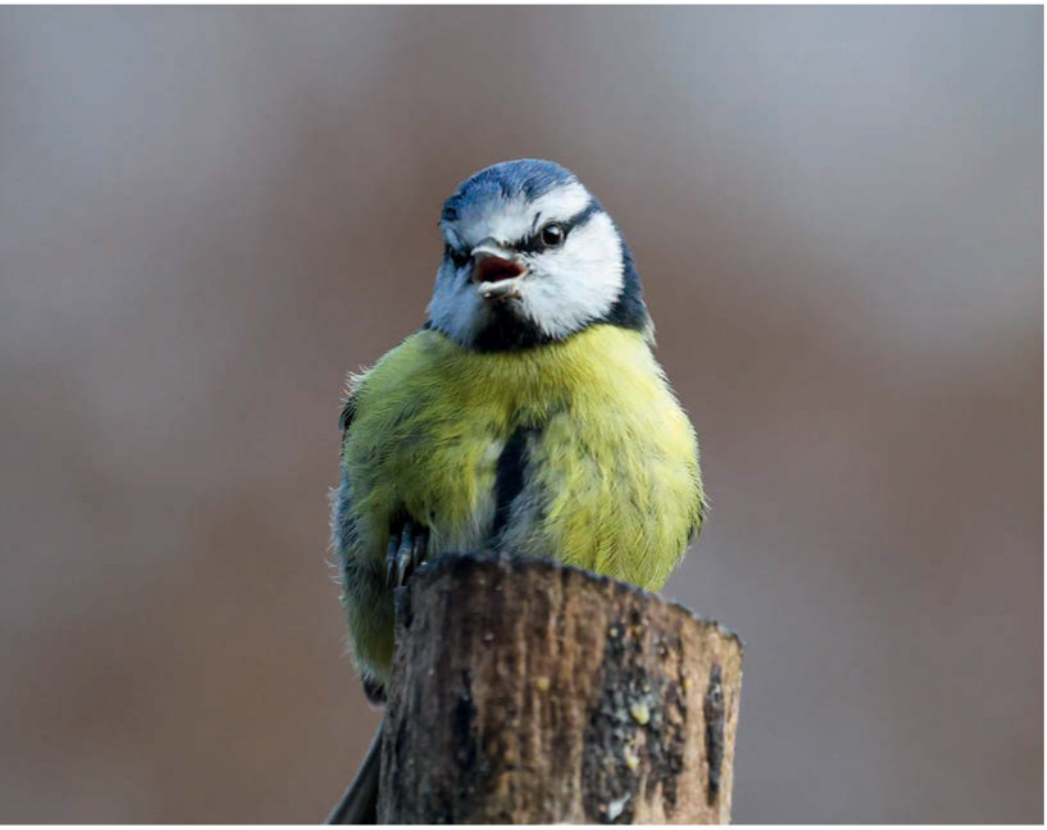
Sony A9, Sony FE 70-200mm F4 lens, 1/250sec at f/8, ISO 1000, 97mm

'For this shot I had to lay very still and camouflaged at the base of a pine tree I know red squirrels descend frequently to forage. In the viewfinder the image appears upside down so composition is tricky but this inquisitive red posed long enough for me to grab the shot.'

Instagram: @i.groves

We also liked...

It's good to share



No Paparazzi Please! by Rachel Watts

Canon EOS R6 Mark II, Canon RF 100-500mm F4.5-7.1 L, 1/250sec at f/7.1, ISO 3200, 500mm

'This photo of an expressive Eurasian blue tit, who looks like he's telling me off, was taken in November; however, I was very lucky with the weather. Despite the rain, the sun came out, being diffused by the clouds, which made for some beautiful lighting – it catching in the bird's eye.'

Website: rachelwattsphotography.com
Instagram: @rachelwattsphotography

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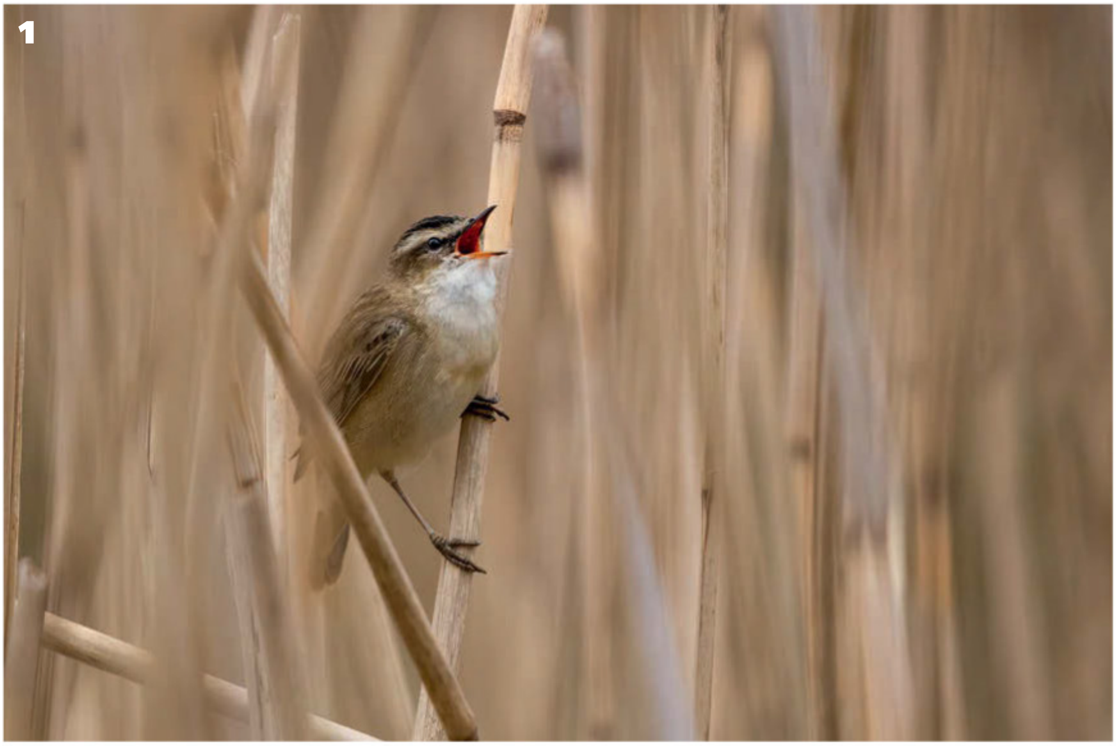

1 Sedge Warbler by Stuart Blair

2 Badger by Ronnie Anderson

3 Praying Mantis on Lavender by Janet Hoggan

4 Mull Sea Eagle by David Mackay

5 Yesnaby Castle Sea Stack by Andrew Reid

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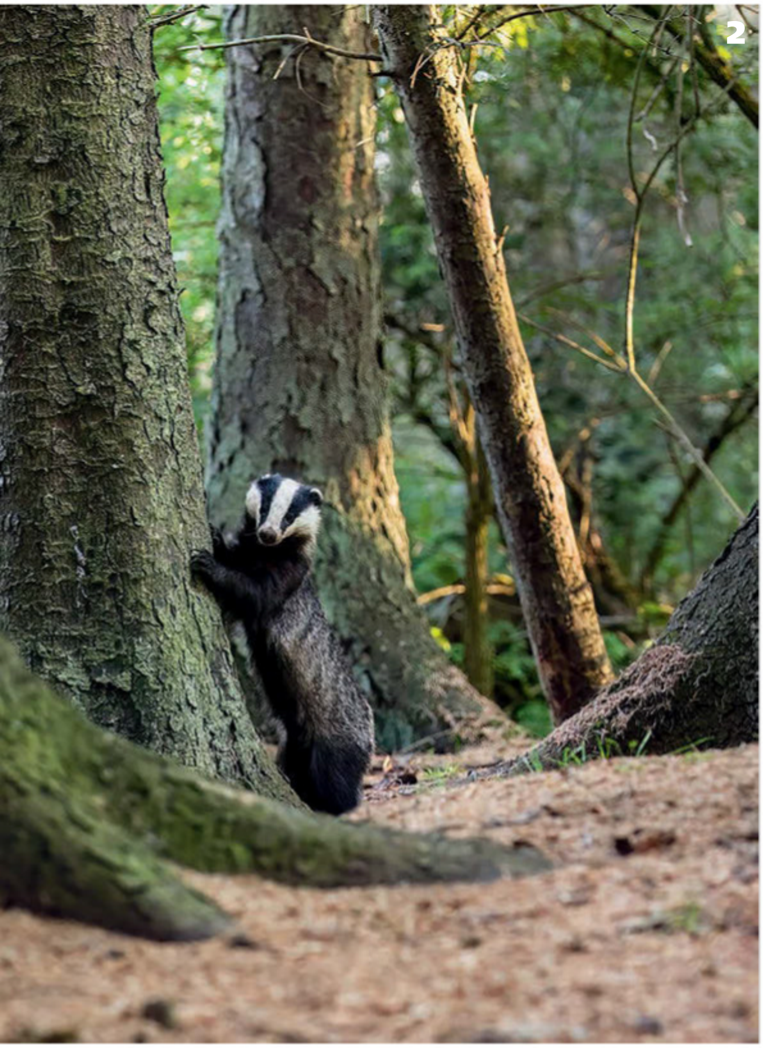

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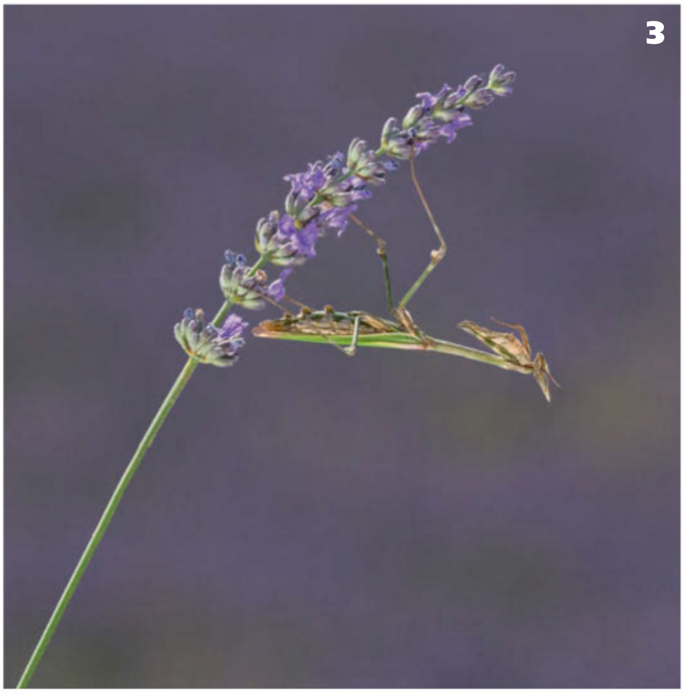

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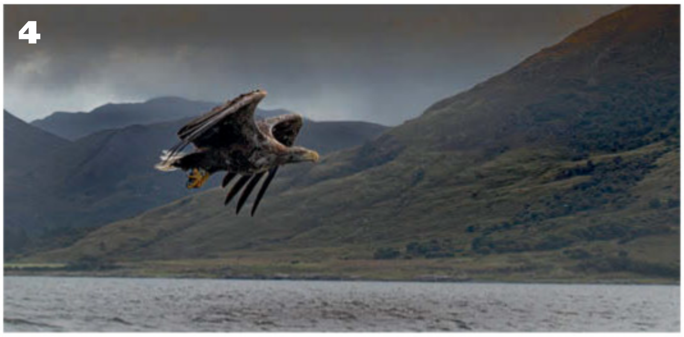

5

Join the Club

This friendly, active club has formal and informal meetings and welcomes all levels

When was the club founded?
Midlothian Camera Club was founded in 1972, and was originally known as Esk Valley Camera Club. It is one of the few clubs in Scotland which owns its own premises, two merged mill workers' cottages in Lasswade.

What does the club offer to new members?
We are a small and very friendly and active club, always ready to welcome new members of all abilities. Our facilities include a darkroom, kitchen/lounge and a well-equipped studio which has a range of lighting equipment and backdrops. The studio is also our meeting room and has full projection and screen facilities. We have a 'New to Photography' group which gives practical advice on various subjects such as nature, portrait, landscape and sport. Our Forward Group is an informal discussion group which meets monthly to look at, and advise on, members' photographic projects. We also have equipment for printing and mounting photographs.

Describe a typical club meeting
We meet every Tuesday evening from September to April. Our meetings include lectures from outside speakers, demonstrations and technical evenings when experienced members demonstrate specific skills. We have a couple of themed Model Nights (e.g. vintage fashion, members' pets) when we invite local models, both two- and four-legged, to pose for us while we learn the craft of portraiture photography. We have a number of print and PDI competitions, as well as a couple of interclub battles every year. Our evenings usually begin around 7pm when members start congregating in the kitchen, catching up with the latest news over a cup of coffee. The formal evenings start at 7.30pm.

Do you invite guest speakers?
We have around a dozen guest speakers every year, either in person or by Zoom link, which allows us to invite speakers from a distance which might be difficult to arrange in person. This year, the subjects include modelling, wildlife and nature, landscape, ICM techniques, travel, underwater photography and flower photography.

Do members compete in regional or national competitions?
As well as our local interclub battles, we enter the annual Scottish Photographic Federation print and PDI championships. Some of our members are members of the Royal Photographic Society, three of whom have achieved their LRPS, one has an ARPS and we have one FRPS member. One member has achieved more than 1,700 acceptances in European salons while another member is rapidly amassing acceptances towards the AFIAP distinction. In addition, a further club member has won commendations and awards in the Scottish Landscape Photographer of the Year competition.

How many members do you have?
Around 40.

Are any residential trips or outings planned?
A number of our members have made trips to the Isle of May to photograph the seabirds there, and we recently visited the premises of a national photo printing company.

Funny stories?
We don't have any funny stories, but we do have one long-standing member who revels in relating the most awful jokes and puns. He is also the judge of our annual, informal themed competition for which he awards a light-hearted 'prize'.

What are the club's goals for the future?
We try to keep up with the latest trends in photography and would like to encourage more young people to take up the hobby. AP

6

Club essentials

Midlothian Camera Club

7 Polton Road, Lasswade,
Midlothian

Meets: Formal meetings are Tuesdays 7.30pm to 9pm, September to April. Informal meetings Thursdays 7.30pm to 9pm, no agenda – members can meet to chat/use the studio.

Membership: £70 per year; Concessions (over-65s, unemployed, registered disabled, students) £55; Junior Membership (under 18s) £45.

Contact: Lesley Baxter on midlothianccenquiries@gmail.com

Website: https://midlothiancamera.club

6 Shell Pump No More by David Meikle

7 Tradeston Bridge by Debra Duncan

8 Eventing at Hopetoun by Joyce Kent

9 Piggy Backs and Pony Tails by Simon Wootton

7

8

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Best Buys

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A round-up of the AP testing team's favourite and most highly rated kit, including both cameras and all kinds of accessories, across a wide range of price points

OM System Tough TG-7

● £499 ● explore.omsystem.com

This latest model in a long line of class-leading rugged cameras is waterproof to 15m, shockproof against a 2.1m drop, crushproof and freezeproof. The 25-100mm equivalent lens is paired with a 12MP sensor, with in-body stabilisation to combat shake. Viewing is via a 3in LCD. The TG-7 is also one of the few cameras of its type that can record raw files.

★★★★☆ **Reviewed 2 Apr 2024**

Canon PowerShot G1 X Mark III

● £1,140 ● www.canon.co.uk

This unique zoom compact offers excellent image quality by employing the same 24.2MP APS-C sensor as several of Canon's DSLRs and mirrorless cameras, along with a 24-72mm equivalent lens. A central viewfinder, fully articulated touchscreen and comprehensive external controls round off a superb little camera for enthusiast photographers.

★★★★★

Reviewed
3 Feb 2018

Fujifilm X100VI

● £1,599 ● www.fujifilm.eu/uk

The sixth version of Fujifilm's charismatic rangefinder-styled compact boasts a 40MP APS-C sensor in front of its fixed 23mm f/2 lens. It also gains in-body stabilisation while barely increasing in size. Traditional analogue control dials are joined by a unique hybrid optical/electronic viewfinder and a tilting touchscreen on the back. It's a truly fabulous camera.

★★★★★

Reviewed
9 Apr 2024

Ricoh GR III

● £949 ● ricohgr.eu/en-gb

A favourite of street photographers, the GR III combines a 24MP APS-C sensor and a sharp 28mm equivalent f/2.8 lens in a slim, pocketable body. It offers sensitivities up to ISO 102,400 and 4fps shooting, while in-body image stabilisation helps keeps image sharp. Viewing is via a fixed 3in rear LCD or an optional optical viewfinder that slots onto the hot shoe.

★★★★☆

Reviewed
3 Aug
2019

Sony RX100 VII

● £1,050 ● www.sony.co.uk

Sony has somehow crammed a 24-200mm equivalent zoom, pop-up electronic viewfinder, tilting screen, 20 fps shooting and 4K video recording into a body that you can slip into a jacket pocket. With the firm's latest AF technology also on board, it's without doubt the most accomplished pocket camera on the market.

★★★★½

Reviewed
5 Oct 2019

Sony RX10 IV

● £1,500 ● www.sony.co.uk

This sets a new standard for superzoom cameras, with a 24-600mm equivalent lens, 20MP 1in sensor, and 24 fps continuous shooting. Its SLR-shaped body hosts a large electronic viewfinder and a decent set of physical controls. It's the best all-in-one camera for wildlife or travel photography that you can buy right now.

★★★★★

Reviewed
2 Dec 2017

BEST BUYS REVISITING GREAT KIT FROM OUR TEST ARCHIVES

Canon EOS 250D

● £650 with 18-55mm IS lens ● www.canon.co.uk

One of the smallest DSLRs around, the EOS 250D strikes a great balance between portability and usability. It's equipped with a novice-friendly Guided Mode, while Canon's Dual Pixel CMOS sensor provides excellent autofocus in live view. Image quality is very good, delivering vibrant colours and plenty of fine detail.

★★★★☆

Reviewed 7 Sep 2019

Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark IV

● £749 with 14-42mm ● explore.omsystem.com

With a charismatic retro design, fine handling, highly effective in-body stabilisation and attractive JPEG output, Olympus has made a camera that's more pleasant to use than its entry-level competitors. Its 20MP sensor delivers good results up to ISO 3200 at least, and its tilting screen can be set to face forwards beneath the camera.

★★★★½

Reviewed 26 Sep 2020

Fujifilm X-T5

● £1,699 body only ● www.fujifilm.eu/uk

Fujifilm's latest X-T model is a great choice for serious enthusiast photographers. It boasts a 40MP APS-C sensor housed in a retro-styled body covered with traditional analogue control dials. Subject-detection autofocus, in-body stabilisation and Fujifilm's lovely colour modes round off an extremely desirable package.

★★★★★

Reviewed 3 Jan 2023

Canon EOS R50

● £899 with 15-45mm lens ● www.canon.co.uk

With the EOS R50, Canon has fitted some impressive technology into a compact and lightweight body. It boasts highly capable subject recognition autofocus coupled with rapid continuous shooting. Image quality is very pleasing too, with attractive files direct from the camera. It also works well with EF-mount DSLR lenses.

★★★★☆

Reviewed 6 Jun 2023

Fujifilm X-T30 II

● £899 with 15-45mm lens ● www.fujifilm.eu/uk

This lovely little camera provides excellent performance, while preserving the charm and charisma of the X-series. It's a great all-rounder, and handles exceptionally well thanks to an intuitive interface based around traditional analogue dials. Image quality is superb in both raw and JPEG, aided by Fujifilm's peerless Film Simulation modes.

★★★★★

Reviewed 8 Feb 2022

Panasonic Lumix GH6

● £1,949 body only ● www.panasonic.com/uk

Panasonic's flagship Micro Four Thirds camera is aimed at videographers, but holds its own when capturing stills as well. Its 25MP sensor delivers plenty of detail, while enabling 5.7K recording at 60fps, or 4K at 120fps. Pro-spec video functionality and highly effective in-body stabilisation round off a fine package for content creators.

★★★★½

Reviewed 26 Apr 2022

Fujifilm X-S20

● £1,249 body only ● www.fujifilm.eu/uk

Styled like a mini DSLR, the X-S20 uses electronic dials for changing exposure settings, as opposed to the X-T series' analogue controls. But you still get Fujifilm's signature fine image quality, along with in-body image stabilisation. It also boasts an array of advanced video features, making it a great choice for vloggers and photographers alike.

★★★★★

Reviewed 25 Jul 2023

Panasonic Lumix G9

● £1,000 body only ● www.panasonic.com/uk

The finest Micro Four Thirds stills camera Panasonic has ever produced, the G9 backs up its sturdy construction with a winning combination of high-speed shooting, fast focusing and effective in-body stabilisation. Boasting a control layout as complete as most pro-level DSLRs, it's an extremely versatile camera that's capable of dealing with any subject.

★★★★½

Reviewed 27 Jan 2018

OM System OM-1

● £1,999 body only ● explore.omsystem.com

It may be nostalgically named after a classic 35mm SLR, but there's nothing old-fashioned about this high-speed powerhouse. It's capable of shooting at 120fps with focus fixed, or 50fps with AF. AI subject detection recognises vehicles, animals and birds. It's also rugged, with IP53-rated weather-sealing, and includes class-leading stabilisation.

★★★★★

Reviewed 15 Mar 2022

LCE london camera exchange
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26 Stores Nationwide

Nikon Z 6II

● £2,000 body only ● www.nikon.co.uk

This upgraded full-frame mirrorless all-rounder boasts a 24.5MP sensor, 273-point autofocus and rapid 14fps burst shooting. It also gains an SD card slot, alongside XQD/CFexpress. Its excellent viewfinder is complemented by a tilting screen, and both image quality and handling are superb.

★★★★½

Reviewed
9 Jan 2021

Sony Alpha 7 IV

● £2,399 body only ● www.sony.co.uk

Sony's latest enthusiast-focused full-frame mirrorless model sets a new standard in its class. Its 33MP full-frame sensor delivers excellent image quality, and it can shoot at up to 10fps. Its practically foolproof subject-detection AF can now recognise birds as well as humans and animals. A large, clear viewfinder and fully articulated touchscreen round off the package.

★★★★★

Reviewed
11 Dec 2021

Nikon D780

● £2,299 body only ● www.nikon.co.uk

This highly accomplished 24MP full-frame model shows that there's life in the DSLR yet. It's superbly built with extensive weather sealing, handles brilliantly, and gives excellent results in any conditions. It'll provide top-level service to photographers who want to keep using their F-mount lenses and still prefer an optical viewfinder.

★★★★★

Reviewed
4 Apr 2020

Nikon Z 7II

● £2,999 body only ● www.nikon.co.uk

Nikon has delivered a sensible update to its flagship high-res model, with an additional SD card slot and slightly faster shooting. As before, its 45.7MP sensor gives stunning image quality, backed up by 5-axis in-body image stabilisation and fast, accurate autofocus. The viewfinder is superb, and F-mount SLR lenses can be used via the FTZ adapter.

★★★★½

Reviewed
6 Feb 2021

Nikon Z 9

● £5,299 body only ● www.nikon.co.uk

Without doubt Nikon's finest camera yet, the Z 9 combines high resolution, breathtaking speed, subject-recognition autofocus and pro-level build. It's capable of shooting 45.7MP raw files at 20fps for 1,000 frames, and 11MP JPEGs at 120fps. It can also record 8K video. With its superb viewfinder and tilting rear screen, it's probably the most capable camera around.

★★★★★

Reviewed
22 Mar 2022

Canon EOS R6 Mark II

● £2,779 body only ● www.canon.co.uk

Based around a 24MP full-frame sensor, this brilliant all-rounder will do almost anything you might ask it to. It combines reliable subject-detection AF, rapid continuous shooting, and effective image stabilisation in a body that handles well and gives great results. It also works well with adapted EF-mount DSLR lenses.

★★★★★

Reviewed
21 Mar 2023

Sony Alpha 7R V

● £3,999 body only ● www.sony.co.uk

With its 61MP full-frame sensor, the A7R V provides class-leading image quality while adding a whole array of improvements over its predecessor. These include subject-detection AF, a larger, more detailed viewfinder, and a more flexible rear LCD design. For those whose needs are more about image quality than speed, it's probably the best full-frame camera you can buy.

★★★★★

Reviewed
17 Jan 2023

Leica M11 Monochrom

● £8,300 body only ● uk.leica-camera.com

Within its own specialist niche, this monochrome-only manual-focus rangefinder is almost perfect. Its build quality is stunning, and the pared-back design allows you to immerse yourself completely in the process of taking pictures. Most importantly, the 60.1MP sensor produces fantastic results, reaching a new pinnacle in black & white image quality.

★★★★★

Reviewed
16 May 2023

Fujifilm GFX100 II

● £6,999 body only ● www.fujifilm.eu/uk

Fujifilm's latest super-high resolution medium-format camera places an updated 102MP sensor in a pro-spec modular body. Subject-detection autofocus is on board for animals, birds and vehicles, while in-body image stabilisation helps keep handheld shots sharp. It's the ideal camera for serious photographers who demand the ultimate in image quality.

★★★★★

Reviewed
21 Nov 2023

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PART EXCHANGE WELCOME
Trustpilot ★★★★★ 4.9 Google
AN EMPLOYEE OWNED BUSINESS
www.LCEgroup.co.uk

Tenba DNA 9 Slim Messenger

● £110 ● uk.tenba.com

If you'd like a small shoulder bag to carry a camera and a couple of lenses, this is among the best you'll find. Measuring 28cm wide by 20cm tall, it's well suited to holding a mirrorless camera or a compact DSLR. The quality of materials and construction is excellent, and there are plenty of handy pockets for organising accessories.

★★★★★ **Reviewed 26 Apr 2022**

Vanguard Veo Select 46BR

● £120 ● www.vanguardworld.co.uk

This backpack is capable of swallowing a substantial amount of kit while retaining a travel-friendly 28cm slim profile. An array of access points allow you to get at your kit from the back, top or either side. It's capable of holding a full-frame DSLR with 4-6 lenses along with a 13in laptop.

★★★★★

Reviewed 6 Jul 2019

Wandrd Prvke 31

● £279 (photography bundle) ● eu.wandrd.com

This spacious backpack offers an excellent combination of uncluttered style, rugged construction and a selection of genuinely useful pockets. The roll-close top section is the icing on the cake that always seems to allow just one more item to be squeezed in. Crucially, it's comfortable to carry over long distances.

★★★★★ **Reviewed 11 Sep 2021**

NiSi NM-180 Macro Rail

● £105 ● www.nisioptics.co.uk

Arguably the best macro focusing rail available right now, the NM-180 combines excellent quality build with super-smooth operation. It's easily capable of supporting a full-frame SLR while offering up to 130mm of travel, with a fold-out handle providing fine adjustment. It also boasts extensive compatibility with the Arca Swiss quick release system, with a dovetail profile along its base and a rotating clamp on top.

★★★★★

Reviewed 24 Oct 2020

Cullmann Rondo 460M RB8.5

● £75 ● www.transcontinenta.co.uk/cullmann

If you want a fully featured tripod kit on a budget, this is a great choice. Four-section aluminium legs provide a max height of 160cm, while packing down to 43.5cm. It's rated to support a 4kg load, weighs 1.46kg, and one leg can be combined with the centre column to form a monopod.

★★★★½

Reviewed 21 Mar 2020

MeFOTO RoadTrip PRO

● £225 ● uk.benroeu.com

Few tripods come close to matching this one for sheer versatility. It extends to 152.5cm, folds down to 38.5cm and weighs 1.37kg. One leg can be detached for use as a monopod or boom arm, and there's even a small desktop stand stowed inside the centre column. It's sturdy enough to support a full-frame mirrorless set-up.

★★★★★

Reviewed 12 Apr 2022

Benro Rhino 24C tripod with VX25 head

● £250 ● uk.benroeu.com

Benro has got pretty much everything right with this sturdy, well-designed tripod and head that'll support a substantial load. This four-section carbon fibre model offers a maximum height of almost 1.7m, while folding down to 49cm and weighing 1.74kg. It's easily capable of supporting a full-frame DSLR with a telephoto zoom. Quite simply, it's a fantastic kit for the money.

★★★★★ **Reviewed 28 Nov 2020**

NiSi True Color ND-Vario 1-5 stops

● £89-£189 ● www.nisioptics.co.uk

This high-quality variable neutral density filter is ideal for regulating the amount of light entering your lens, without introducing any colour cast. It's optically excellent, boasts an oil and water-repellent coating, and includes a handy and accurate density scale. It's available in sizes from 40.5mm to 95mm.

★★★★★

Reviewed 24 May 2022

Benro SupaDupa Pro MSDPL46C

● £190 ● uk.benroeu.com

It may have a ridiculous name, but this five-section carbon fibre model might just be the best monopod we've ever tested. One clip leg lock provides easy length adjustment, while the lower twist locks are waterproof. On the top there's a clever bowl head with an Arca-compatible clamp. It's a great choice for those who regularly shoot with large telephotos.

★★★★★

Reviewed 24 Apr 2021

LCE london camera exchange
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Nissin i40

● £159 ● www.kenro.co.uk

A compact flashgun that's designed for mirrorless cameras, the i40 stands out for its high specification, compact size and ease of use. Its auto-zoom head covers lenses from 24-105mm equivalent. With a powerful output that belies its size, and a built-in LED video light, it's available for most brands of camera.

★★★★★

Reviewed 3 May 2014

RØDE Wireless Go II

● £309 ● en.rode.com

RØDE's compact wireless system makes it easier than ever to get high-quality audio for video recording. This dual-channel wireless mic kit includes two transmitter units and a receiver (a single-transmitter set is also available for £200). Key features include built-in rechargeable batteries lasting up to 7 hours, onboard backup recording, and up to 200m range.

RØDE
WIRELESS GO II
RØDE
RØDE
WIRELESS GO II

★★★★★

Reviewed 15 May 2021

Hahnel ProCube2

● £80 ● www.hahnel.ie

This dual battery charger boasts a sturdy metal shell and interchangeable plates that each accept a pair of batteries. An LCD display shows progress, and a 2.4A USB output allows phones or tablets to be charged once the camera batteries are full. Versions are available for all the main camera brands.

hähnel
pro CUBE2
1365
56% 80%

★★★★★

Reviewed 24 Feb 2018

Datacolor SpyderX Pro

● £159 ● www.datacolor.com

If you like to post-process your images, you need to be sure that your monitor is showing colours accurately. Datacolor has designed the SpyderX to calibrate your display faster than ever before, with the process taking two minutes. For photographers the Pro package makes most sense.

about
most
datacolor
Spyder X

★★★★★

Reviewed 6 Apr 2019

Rotolight NEO 3

● £549 (Ultimate Kit) ● www.rotolight.com

LED lighting technology has advanced in leaps and bounds over recent years. Rotolight's compact on-camera NEO 3 offers a unique feature set thanks to its full colour RGBWW LEDs, with the ability to provide either continuous light or flash in 16.7 million colours. This firm has also programmed in the characteristics of 2,500 colour filters. Power is provided by an NP-F type Li-ion battery.

★★★★½

Reviewed 5 Apr 2022

Hoya Ultra-Pro Circular Polariser

● £47-£179 ● www.holdan.co.uk

Hoya's premium range of circular polarisers is available in 13 sizes from 37mm to 82mm. These filters feature 16 layers of anti-reflective coatings, high transmission, and are designed to repel water and oil while being scratch and stain resistant. An ultra-thin aluminium frame prevents vignetting when used with wideangle lenses.

HOYA
ULTRA-PRO
FILTER
CIR-PL
HD
ULTRA
Water, Stain & Scratch Resistant

★★★★★

Reviewed 3 Mar 2018

Kase Wolverine K9 100mm Entry-Level Kit

● £385 ● www.kasefilters.com

With this top-quality filter system, Kase has carefully rethought every component. The slimline, low-profile holder benefits from extensive light-sealing, while the 82mm polariser clips into place magnetically; it's also easy to adjust from behind the camera. All of the filters use top-quality glass, and everything fits together into a single case. The result is a top-quality set-up that's easy to use and delivers superb results.

★★★★★

Reviewed 5 Dec 2020

Intrepid Compact Enlarger

● £280 ● www.intrepidcamera.co.uk

For film photography enthusiasts wishing to make prints at home, this compact and affordable unit includes lots of handy features. Based around full-colour LED technology, it supports both mono and colour printing. It's perfect for those who don't have space for a permanent darkroom.

★★★★★

Reviewed 17 Jul 2021

Fujifilm Instax Link WIDE

● £140 ● www.instax.co.uk

This brilliant portable printer produces great-looking 6x10cm prints on Fujifilm's Instax Wide film. It connects to your smartphone via Bluetooth and is controlled using an attractively designed and intuitive app. Powered by a built-in rechargeable battery and available in white or grey, it'll slip easily into a bag.

★★★★★

Reviewed 25 Jan 2022

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CANON EOS R5 MARK II
Master the Moment

NEW! Limited stock available

45 MEGA PIXELS | 30 fps | 3.1" | IS | 8K

Incredible 45-megapixel resolution meets breath-taking speed up to 30fps and up to 8K 60p RAW video. The result is a camera that excels in every genre of visual story telling. DIGIC Accelerator technology powers Dual Pixel Intelligent AF – now with next-generation Eye Control AF and Action Priority mode.

Scan here to watch our hands-on review!

BODY ONLY £4,499

+ RF 24-105MM F/4 L £5,749

SONY A1 II
Unrivalled

NEW! Expected January 2025

50.1 MEGA PIXELS | 30 fps | 3.1" | IS | 8K

The a1 II gives you everything you need to achieve a higher capture success rate and more, including 50MP high resolution, AI-based subject recognition AF, high-speed continuous shooting, and an advanced workflow from capture to delivery that provides professionals with unrivalled efficiency and freedom.

Scan here to watch our hands-on review!

BODY ONLY £6,299

CANON EOS R8

SAVE £400

BODY ONLY £1,299
Normally £1,699

CANON EOS R6 II

SAVE £780

BODY ONLY £1,999
Normally £2,779

CANON EOS R5

SAVE £800

BODY ONLY £2,999
Normally £3,799

SONY A7 IV

£300 CASH BACK

BODY ONLY £1,599*
*Price after £300 cashback.
You pay £1,899 & claim £300 from Sony UK.

SONY A9 II

£300 CASH BACK

BODY ONLY £3,699*
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SONY FE 28-70MM
F/2 GM

NEW!

£3,049
NOW IN STOCK!
See website to learn more.

CANON RF 24MM
F/1.4L VCM

NEW!

£1,679
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See website to learn more.

CANON RF 70-200MM
F/2.8L IS USM Z

NEW!

£3,449
Expected January 2025
Available in Black or White.

CANON PIXMA PRO-200S
A3+ PRINTER

NEW!

£459
Expected January 2025
See website to learn more.

FUJIFILM X-M5
Colour Your Moment

NEW! Now in stock!

26.1 MEGA PIXELS | 30 fps | 3.0" | IS | 6K

Every day is different. The weather, the light, the way you feel – each offers a chance to view the world in a new way.

The FUJIFILM X-M5 has everything you need to bring that vision to life. Compact, lightweight & with powerful photo and video functions, it's the perfect companion to record everyday life.

Scan here to watch our hands-on review!

BODY ONLY £799

+ XC 15-45MM £899

+ XC 35MM f/2 £899

Available in black or silver designs.

NIKON Z6 III
Outperfrom

SAVE UP TO £750 Offer ends 31.01.2025

24.5 MEGA PIXELS | 120 fps | 3.2" | IS | 6K

At the heart of the NEW Z6 III is the world's first partially stacked full-frame CMOS sensor – designed to let the camera perform big and stay small, it delivers in every way with incredible image quality and eye-widening dynamic range and colour fidelity.

Scan here to watch our hands-on review!

BODY ONLY £1,999*
Normally £2,699

+ 24-70MM F/4 S £2,599*
Normally £3,249

+ 24-120MM £2,799*
Normally £3,549

FUJIFILM X-T5

SAVE £250

BODY ONLY £1,449
Normally £1,699

FUJIFILM X-H2

SAVE £230

BODY ONLY £1,669
Normally £1,899

FUJIFILM XF 33MM
F/1.4 R LM WR

SAVE £100

OUR PRICE £629
Normally £729

LEICA SL3-S
Moments Without Limits

The SL3-S allows productions to meet professional standards at never before seen speeds, all while staying true to the Leica aesthetics and functional design. With fast and precise autofocus, a Maestro IV processor and intuitive handling, it is tailored to meet the demands of today.

NEW!

Body Only
£4,500
See website for latest availability

PANASONIC LUMIX TZ99
Explore the World

Compact and feature-packed, the LUMIX TZ99 is perfect for capturing life's adventures. Equipped with a 24-720mm LEICA DC lens this camera offers 30x optical zoom and up to 60x with iZoom, so you can capture everything from sweeping landscapes to intricate details with stunning clarity.

NEW!

Coming soon!
£469
Expected late January 2025

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SIGMA 23MM
f/1.4 DC DN | Contemporary

Designed for Canon mirrorless cameras with crop sensors, this lens is a versatile wide-standard prime that is well suited to street photography, landscapes, wider-angle portraits, weddings and travel. Its F1.4 aperture ensures fast shutter speeds for working hand-held in low-light conditions, and also provides a very shallow depth-of-field for blurry backgrounds.

NEW!

Canon RF Mount **£479** Expected January 2025!

TAMRON 11-20MM
f/2.8 Di III-A RXD

Designed for Canon mirrorless cameras with crop sensors, this lens features a maximum aperture of f/2.8 and allows users to fully enjoy the distinctive depth-of-field and unique perspective provided by an ultra wide-angle lens. The lens shines in various scenarios, including architecture, landscape, indoor environmental portraits, travel & interior photography.

NEW!

Canon RF Mount **£649** Now in stock!

SIGMA 14MM
F/1.4 DG DN | ART
SONY E / L-MOUNT
OUR PRICE **£1,399**

SIGMA 16-28MM
F/2.8 DG DN | C
SONY E / L-MOUNT
OUR PRICE **£799**

SIGMA 100-400MM
F/5-6.3 DG DN OS | C
SONY E / FUJIFILM X / L-MOUNT
OUR PRICE **£849**

TAMRON 90MM
F/2.8 DI III MACRO VXD
SONY E / NIKON Z MOUNT
NEW!
£599
Limited stock now available!

TAMRON 28-75MM
F/2.8 DI III VXD G2
SONY E / NIKON Z MOUNT
£849
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TAMRON 35-150MM
F/2-2.8 DI III VXD
SONY E / NIKON Z MOUNT
£1,799
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VANGUARD VEO 3T+ 264CB
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£219
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MOMENT EVERYTHING TECH
19L TOTE BAG V2
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MOMENT EVERYTHING
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£199.99

LONG WEEKEND 35MM FILM CAMERA
£49
Various colours available

DJI FLIP
Open New Possibilities

DJI Flip features a stunning compact design with exceptional imaging capabilities. It supports palm takeoff without a remote, allowing you to capture moments on the go. Its AI Subject Tracking feature ensures the main subject stays perfectly framed, so you can set up captivating shots with ease.

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£19
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VSGO PORTABLE LENS CLEANING KIT
NEW!
£29

VSGO SENSOR CLEANING SWABS
FULL FRAME
NEW!
£39

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USED **NIKON Z7 II** BODY ONLY
available from **£1,029**

USED **SONY A7 IV** BODY ONLY
available from **£1,339**

USED **LEICA Q2** COMPACT
available from **£2,409**

CANON DSLRS

EOS 5D Mark IV	from **£559**
EOS 5D Mark III	from **£329**
EOS 5D Mark II	from **£174**
EOS 6D Mark II	from **£429**
EOS 6D	from **£224**

CANON MIRRORLESS

EOS R5	from **£1,789**
EOS R6 Mark II	from **£1,549**
EOS R6	from **£1,029**
EOS R8	from **£1,169**
EOS R7	from **£949**

NIKON DSLRS

D850	from **£849**
D780	from **£1,059**
D810	from **£569**
D750	from **£507**
D500	from **£464**

NIKON MIRRORLESS

Z7	from **£1,149**
Z6 III	from **£1,899**
Z6 II	from **£959**
Z5	from **£629**
Z30	from **£459**

SONY MIRRORLESS

A9 III	from **£4,649**
A9	from **£1,219**
A7S III	from **£2,569**
A7R IVA	from **£1,619**
A7R III	from **£1,129**
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A7C	from **£869**
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LEICA MIRRORLESS

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M10	from **£3,599**
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Final Analysis

Paul Hill considers...

The Silent Room 2022-23 by Wedgwood Stevenson

‘I seem to have difficulty with reality – to understand things. But photography helps me deal with it.’

I was looking at the work of Wedgwood Stevenson who came to a workshop with renowned photographic artist Mari Mahr at my Photographers Place in 1994 with a portfolio of startling black & white images taken in his home in Staffordshire. Many were of his wife. I have one of those on a wall at home.

I asked him about his name, of course. Yes, he was from the Potteries and worked for the famous Spode Works that pioneered transfer printing on to bone china and earthenware in the 18th century.

Personal

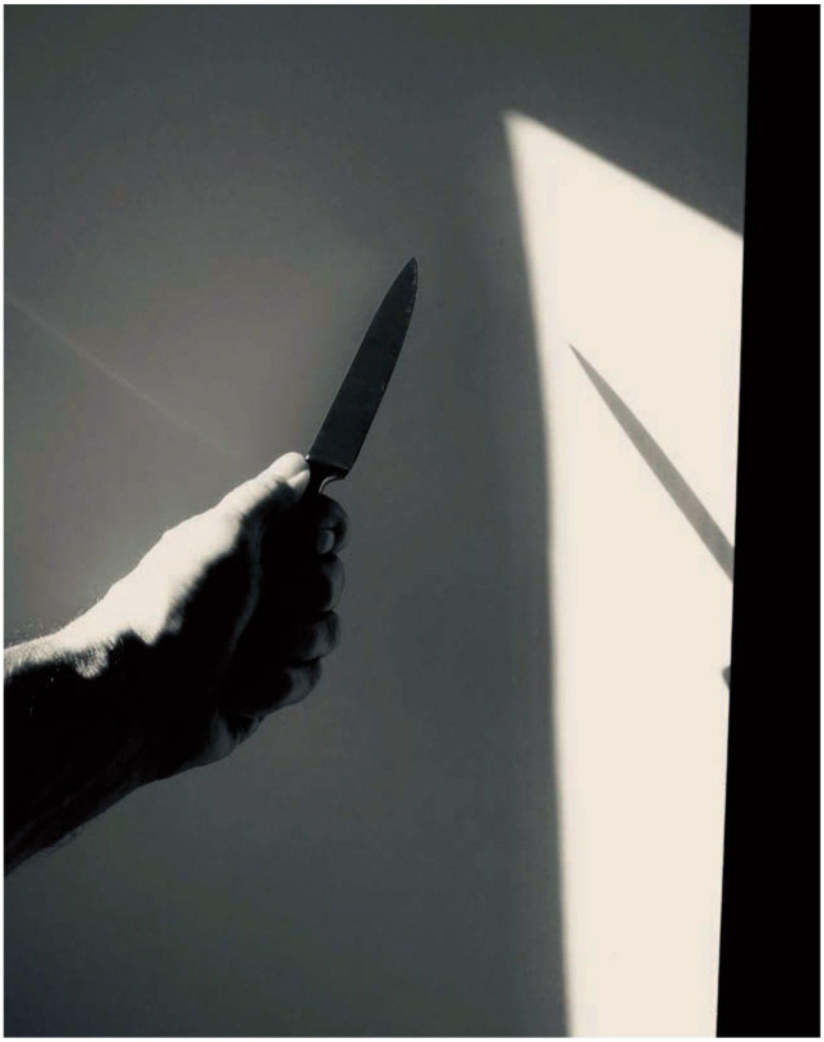
‘I suppose it was inevitable I would end up working in a pottery factory, but I actually started my working life in the 1970s as a photographer,’ he told me. ‘I worked in a photographic studio, but didn’t like it much. So, I left and went to Spode in 1983, and started using the camera in a more personal way. I found it great for capturing intimate moments and memories.’

In 2007 Spode went bust, and after a time out of work Wedgwood ended up in a local hospital pharmacy in Stoke-on-Trent.

He moved away from photography and started painting and constructing surreal collages that were influenced by Mari Mahr. He converted his darkroom into a studio and joined the Leeds Surrealist Group that had close ties with surrealist groups – notably in Chicago, Madrid, Paris, Prague and Stockholm. It was a good move as he successfully exhibited this work worldwide, but in 2018 he fell in love with the iPad and later Fuji Instax. He was back in the photographic fold.

Emotive

At this point he came to see me again with another portfolio of emotive, highly charged chiaroscuro images that included this one here. He had been trying to deal with grief after his sister’s recent stroke, followed a short time later by the sudden death of his brother.



He explained: ‘Some are born of recent personal loss and the need for answers to questions that haunt me. Above all, what is the meaning of our existence? Maybe it’s because I am bipolar that I can’t talk or write about grief. I can only express it visually.

‘I’ve returned to black & white and converted my painting studio back into a wet darkroom. I prefer analogue to digital. I suppose it is the tactile thing – more “real”,’ he explained.

That made sense because all the images are powerfully intense, and they are evidence of a wonderfully creative person who frequently finds life difficult.

The Silent Room is an exquisite monograph and selecting one has been difficult as the sequencing in the book is so important.

Photography revealingly lends itself to symbolism, ambiguity, and metaphor. I think for Wedgwood the intensity and actuality of his life is somehow softened and made a bit more relatable by the ‘reality’ of a photograph.

Among many achievements, Paul Hill has written two books on photography, was director of the Creative Photography course at Trent Polytechnic and has been exhibited numerous times. He was the first photographer to receive an MBE for services to photography and the first professor of photographic practice in a British university. **hillonphotography.co.uk**.

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